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Exegesis of the Fathers of the Church

v.1

The Apostolic Fathers

In memoriam

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Introduction

Our purpose here is to expose the fundamental principles and ideas of the Fathers of the Church in the most accessible form for the contemporary reader of our days. The writings of the Fathers of the Church are an essential factor in the establishment of the Christian doctrine which exercised an important influence on the world for many centuries. The exegesis of the writings of the Fathers of the Church is intended to be a contribution to the spiritual and theological history of Christianity.

The patristic writings were compiled and translated in several versions. We will mention precisely our source in every case. Our source here is A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867 ff.).

The editors added to the original text citations from the Old Testament and the New Testament. The phrases of the main text are identical with the Biblical sources mentioned in the original notes. If some differences are found, the source itself is cited. In our exposition, we mention these citations or bring the original source from K. E. Barker & als. (eds.), *Holy Bible International Version*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 2002).

The academic context of the writings of the Fathers of the Church is most extensive. The writings of the Fathers of the Church had been the subject of essential academic works. We mention here a concise bibliography concerning the present subject. See:

Ch. A. Hall, *Reading the Scripture with the Church Fathers*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 1998);
Ch. A. Hall, *Learning Theology with the Church Fathers*, (Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press, 2002);
F. Young, *Exegesis and Theology in Early Christianity*, (London: Routledge, 2012, 2017);
S. E. Porter (ed.) *A Handbook to the Exegesis of the New Testament*, (Leiden: Brill, 1997);
W. J. Burghardt, On Early Christian Exegesis in *Theological Studies* v. 11 (1950), pp. 78 - 116
M. De Cock & e. Klein (eds.), *Literary Contexts of Patristic Biblical Exegesis*, (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2023);
R. L. Wilken, Tradition, Exegesis and the Christological Controversies in *Church History* v. 34 (1965),
pp. 123 - 145;
T. E. Pollard, The Origins of Christian Exegesis in *Journal of Religious History* v. 1 (1961), pp. 138 - 147;
F. M. Young, *Biblical Exegesis and the Formation of Christian Culture*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1997);

Ch. Kannengiesser, *Handbook of Patristic Exegesis: the Bible in Ancient Christianity*, (Leiden: Brill, 2004, 2022)

The First Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians (1)

Chapter 1: Salutation. Praise of the Corinthians before the breaking forth of schism among them

For Clement, his message is the letter of the Church of God at Rome to the Church of God at Corinth and assumes the equality between them. The Epistle is written due to the sudden and successive calamities which occurred.

Clement apologizes for the delayed answer given to the questions asked by the Corinthians, especially about the "shameful and detestable sedition", which was a grievous injury to the venerable and illustrious name of the Corinthians. It is well known that the faith of the Corinthians is "fruitful of virtue" and "firmly established". The Corinthians are admired for their sobriety and moderation of godliness in Christ, for the magnificence of their habitual hospitality and for their perfect and well - grounded knowledge. The Corinthians walked in the commandments of God, being obedient to those who ruled them and honouring the presbyters among them. The Corinthians enjoy sober and serious young men. The Corinthians instructed their wives to do all things with a blameless, becoming and pure conscience, loving their husbands. The Corinthians taught their people to live in the rule of obedience, to manage their household in obedience and to be distinguished by discretion.

Chapter 2: Praise of the Corinthians continued

The Corinthians are distinguished by humility without pride, yielding obediently rather than extorting (2) and were more willing to give up than to receive. (3) The Corinthians were content with the provisions made for them by God and carefully attended His words. Thus, they were inward filled with His doctrine and had before their eyes the sufferings of Christ. Thus, a profound and abundant peace was given them and they had an insatiable desire for doing good. Full of holy designs, with true earnestness of mind and godly confidence, the Corinthians stretch forth their hands to the Almighty God, praying Him to be merciful unto them, if they were guilty of any involuntary transgression. Day and night the Corinthians were

anxious for the whole brotherhood (4) that the number of God's elect might be paved with mercy and a good conscience. The Corinthians were sincere, uncorrupted and forgetful of injuries between one another. They considered as abominable any kind of faction and schism. The Corinthians mourned as their own over the transgressions and deficiencies of their neighbours. They never rejected any act of kindness, being "ready to every good work". (5)

Chapter 3: The sad state of the Corinthian Church after sedition arose in it from envy and emulation

Every kind of honour and happiness was bestowed on the Corinthians but they degenerated and abandoned God the Creator. (6) God punished the Corinthians for their betrayal by the deterioration of the fundamental rules of correct and moral life and the appearance of emulation and envy, strife and sedition, persecution and disorder, war and captivity. Thus, the worthless rose against the honoured, those of no reputation against the renowned, the foolish against the wise, the young against the elder. For this reason, righteousness and peace are now far departed from the Corinthians, inasmuch as everyone abandons the fear of God, does not walk in the ordinances of his appointment nor acts a part becoming a Christian but walks after his own wicked lusts, resuming the practice of the unrighteous and ungodly envy, by which death itself entered into the world. (7)

Chapter 4: Many evils have flowed from this source in ancient times

The argument presented above (Ch. 3), drawn from Genesis 4:3-8, confirms how envy and jealousy led to the murder of a brother. From the beginnings of humanity, envy was the source of many evils. For example, Cain killed his brother Abel. (8) Motivated by envy, Father Jacob fled from Essau his brother. (9) Envy made Joseph to be presented unto death and come into bondage. (10) Envy compelled Moses to flee from Pharon. (11) On account of envy, Aaron and Miriam had to make their own abode without the cam. (12) Envy brought down Dothan and Abiram live to Hades, through the sedition which they excited against Moses, God's servant. (13) Through envy, David underwent the hatred not only of foreigners but was also persecuted by Saul, King of Israel. (14)

Chapter 5: No less evils have arisen from the same source in the most recent times.
The martyrdom of Peter and Paul

In recent times, due to envy and jealousy, the greatest and most righteous pillars of the Church have been persecuted and put to death. Peter and Paul proved themselves a striking example of patience. Peter departed to the place of glory after he endured numerous labours and suffered martyrdom. Paul was thrown into captivity, compelled to flee and stoned. Paul preached to the whole world, suffered martyrdom and went into the holy place proving himself a striking example of patience.

Chapter 6: Continuation. Several other examples

A great multitude of the elect should be added to the martyrs Peter and Paul. Through envy, these martyrs have endured many indignities and tortures. Envy has alienated wives from their husbands; wives ceased to be bone of the husbands' bone. (15) Envy and strife have overthrown great cities and rooted up great cities.

Chapter 7: An exhortation to repentance

All things mentioned above were intended to admonish the readers of their duty and to remind ourselves. We are all struggling on some arena and the same conflict is assigned to all. Therefore, let us give up vain and fruitless cares and approach to the glorious and venerable rule of our holy calling. Let us attend to what is good, pleasing and acceptable to our Creator. Let us learn that, from generation to generation, the Lord has granted a place of repentance to all who would be converted unto Him.
Noah preached repentance and those who listened to him were saved. (16) Jonah proclaimed destruction to the Ninevetes (17) but they, repenting from their sins, propitiated God by prayer and obtained salvation, although they were aliens to the Covenant of God.

Chapter 8: Continuation respecting repentance

By the Holy Spirit, the ministers of the grace of God have spoken about repentance. The Lord of all things has declared with an oath regarding it: "As I live, I desire not the death of the sinner but rather his repentance." (18) The Lord added graciously: "Repent, O house of Israel, of your iniquity." (19) Although the sins of Israel are from earth to heaven, if Israel will return to God with the whole heart, God will listen to them as a holy people. God asks the people of Israel to become clean and learn to do well. Obedience to God will mean prosperity but refusal will mean that "the sword will devour you". (20)

Chapter 9: Examples of the saints

Clement formulated here the principle that humans should yield obedience to the excellent and glorious will of God. By imploring from God mercy and loving kindness, we forsake all fruitless labours, strife and envy which leads to death. We should contemplate those who have perfectly ministered to His Excellent glory. Enoch is an example of righteousness in obedience: he was taken away by God and could not be found. (21) Noah was found faithful and the Lord saved him by the animals which entered into the ark.

Chapter 10: Continuation of the above

Abraham was styled "the friend". (22) He was considered faithful as he was obedient to the words of God. As God told him, he went out of his country and came to the land promised by God. Abraham was designed by God to become a great nation. (23) On account of his faith and hospitality, at an old age, Abraham was given a son, whom he offered as a sacrifice to God. (24)

Chapter 11: Continuation. Lot

On account of his hospitality and godliness, Lot was saved out of Sodom when all the country round was punished by fire and brimstone. Thus, the Lord showed that He does not forsake those that hope in Him but gives up to punishment and torture those that departed from Him. (25)

Chapter 12: The rewards of faith and hospitality. Rahab

Rahab was saved due to her faith and hospitality, receiving spies sent by Joshua to Jericho. (26)

Chapter 13: An exhortation to humility

Brethen should be humble and put aside all feelings of haughtiness, pride, foolishness and anger. The Holy Spirit says that the wise man should not find glory in his wisdom. (27) People should be especially mindful of the teaching of Jesus about meekness and long suffering. (28) By this percept and these rules, human beings should walk in all humility in obedience to His holy words which say: "On whom shall I look but on him that is meek and peaceable and that trembles at my words?" (29)

Chapter 14: We should obey God rather than the authors of sedition

It is right and holy to obey God rather than to follow those who, through pride and sedition, have become the leaders of a detestable emulation. It is a great danger to yield to the inclinations of men who aim at exciting strife and tumults, so as to draw us away from what is good. Let us be kind one to the other according to the pattern of tender mercy and benignity of our Creator. (30), (31)

Chapter 15: We must adhere to those who cultivate peace, not to those who merely pretend to do so

We must separate between those who cultivate peace with godliness and those who hypocritically profess to desire it. This separation is mentioned in the Holy Scripture. (32)

Chapter 16: Christ as an example of humility

Christ is of those who are humble - minded. Christ is the Sceptre of the majesty of God and came in a lowly condition. (33) Christ is the example given to humanity. "If the Lord thus humbled Himself, what shall we do who have through Him come under the yoke of His grace?"

Chapter 17: The Saints as examples of humility

We should be the imitators of those who, in their modesty, proclaimed the coming of Christ: Elijah (34), Elisha (35) and Ezekiel (36). Abraham was especially honoured and was named "friend of God" but he himself, earnestly regarding the glory of God, humbly declared "I am dust and ashes". (37) Moses was called faithful in the house of God and was instrumental in God’s punishment of Egypt but he defined himself very modestly. (38)

Chapter 18: David as an example of humility

King David asked God to have mercy on him and clean him from his iniquity. (39)

Chapter 19: Imitating those examples, let us seek after peace

The present and all the previous generations had been improved by the humility and godly submission; many have received His oracles in fear and truth. Having so many great and glorious examples set before us, let us turn again to the practice of that peace which marked out for us from the beginning. (40) "Let us look steadfastly to the Father and Creator of the universe and cleave to His mighty and surpassingly great gifts and beneficences … Let us reflect how free from wrath He is towards all His creation."

Chapter 20: The peace and harmony of the universe

The universe is subjected to God in peace and harmony. By His will, God established the rules for the peaceful and harmonious existence of day and night, sun, moon and stars, within the prescribed limits and without any deviation. The fruitful earth brings abundance of food at the proper seasons. God created the universe in order to exist in peace and harmony. "God does good to all and most abundantly to us who have fled for refuge to His compassions through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Chapter 21: Let us obey God and not the authors of sedition

We should pay attention lest His many kindnesses lead to the condemnation of us all. This must happen unless we walk worthy of Him and with our mind doing those things which are good and pleasing in His Spirit: "The lamp of the Lord searches the spirit of man; it searches out his inmost spirit." (41) We should reflect how near is God and knows all our thoughts. We should not leave the place which He gave us. We should reject the foolish, inconsiderate and proud who offend God. We must have reverence for the Lord Jesus Christ; we have to highly esteem those who rule over us because of their work. (42) We must respect the aged and instruct the young in the fear of God. We must direct wives to the good.

Chapter 22: These exhortations are confirmed by the Christian faith, which proclaims the misery of sinful conduct

The faith in Christ confirms all these admonitions. (43)

Chapter 23: Be humble and believe that Christ will come again

The all - merciful and beneficial Father has enormous compassion for those who fear Him. God favours those who come to Him with a simple mind. We must not be double minded and we must not let our soul to be lifted up on account of His exceedingly great and glorious gift.

Chapter 24: God continually shows us in nature that there will be a resurrection

The Lord continuously proves the future resurrection by the raising of Jesus Christ from the dead. Day and night declare us a resurrection. The mighty power of the Lord raises the scattered grains and from one see arise many and bring forth fruit.

Chapter 25: The phoenix - an emblem of our resurrection

The bird named *phoenix* is a sign of the resurrection. The phoenix is a unique bird from the East (Arabia), which lives five hundred years. Before its death, the phoenix builds its own nest and dies there. With the decay of the flesh, a kind worm is produced and is nourished from the juices of the dead bird and brings forth feathers. After it acquired strength, the young bird takes up the nest in which are the bones of its parent and moves them into the passes from Arabia to Egypt, into the city called Heliopolis. Flying in the sight of all men, it places the bones of its parent on the altar of the sun and then returns to its former abode. (44)

Chapter 26: We shall rise again then, as the Scripture also testifies

It is written in the Scripture that human beings will raise up. (45)

Chapter 27: In the Hope of resurrection, let us cleave to the omnipotent and omniscient God

With the hope of the human resurrection, we should let our souls be bound to God, who is faithful in His promises and just in His judgements. Nobody can ask God about His deeds and nobody can oppose them. (46), (47).

Chapter 28: God sees all things: therefore, let us avoid transgression

Since God sees and hears everything, we should fear God and forsake the wicked actions resulted from evil desires. Through His mercy, we can be protected from the judgements to come. We cannot escape from His mighty hand and those who run away from God are not accepted. (48)

Chapter 29: Let us draw near to God in purity of heart

We should come close to God with holiness of spirit, loving our gracious and merciful Father who has made us to Himself a part of His choice. "8. When the Most High gave nations their inheritance, when He divided all mankind, He set up boundaries for the peoples according to the number of the sons of Israel. 9. For the Lord’s portion in his people in His people, Jacob has allotted inheritance." (49)

Chapter 30: Let us do things that please God and flee from those He hates, that we may be blessed

Since we are a portion of the Holy One, let us do all things which pertain to holiness; let us avoid all evil speaking, all abominate and impure embraces together with all human drunkenness, seeking after change, all abominable lusts, detestable adultery and execrable pride. "…God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble." (50) Therefore, let us cleave to those who were given the grace by God. Let us praise to be in God, not of ourselves, because God hates those who commend themselves. Let the testimony of our good deeds be borne by others, as did the righteous forefathers. Boldness, arrogance and audacity belong to those that are accursed by God; moderation, humility and meekness belong to those that are blessed by God.

Chapter 31: Let us see by what means we can obtain the divine blessing

Let us cleave to His blessing and consider what are the means of possessing it. Abraham, our Father, was blessed because he wrought righteousness and truth through faith. (51) Isaac, with perfect confidence, knowing what was to happen, cheerfully yielded himself as sacrifice. (52) Jacob, through reason of his brother, went forth with humility from his country to Laban and served him. (53) There, Jacob was given the sceptre of the twelve tribes.

Chapter 32: We are justified not by our works but by faith

Who will candidly consider each detail will recognise the greatness of the gifts which God gave to Jacob. From him have sprung the priests and the Levites who minister at the altar of God. From Jacob descended Lord Jesus Christ. (54) From Jacob arose kings, princes, and rules of the race of Judah. God has promised "Thy seed shall be as the stars of heaven." (55) The Jewish and Christian people are not justified in themselves but by the faith through which, from the beginning, Almighty God has justified all men, to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Chapter 33: But let us not give up the practice of good works and love

God is an example to us of good works. Humans should hasten with all energy and readiness of mind to perform every good work. The Creator and Lord rejoices in His works. With His infinitely great power, God created the universe as well and man and woman, in His image. God blessed human beings and said: "Increase and multiply". (56) It should be an example for us that God rejoiced adorning Himself with His works. Having this example, we must immediately accede to His will and work righteousness with our whole strength.

Chapter 34: Great is the reward of good works with God. Joined in harmony, let us implore the reward from Him

The fundamental idea is that the good servant receives the bread of his service with confidence. Therefore, it is necessary that we prompt in the practice of his service with confidence. Therefore, it is necessary that we be prompt in the practice of welldoing from all things from God. Thus, God warns us that each must be rewarded according to work and deeds. (57) We must submit ourselves to the will of God (58); the whole creature is full of His glory (59). Therefore, we should

consciously gather together in harmony, cry to Him earnestly that we may be made partakers of His great and glorious promises because the Scripture says: "No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him." (60)

Chapter 35: Immense is this reward. How shall we obtain it?

The gifts of God are blessed and wonderful: life, immortality, splendour in righteousness, truth in perfect confidence, faith in assurance, self - control in holiness. Only the Creator and Father of all worlds, the Most Holy, knows the amount and beauty of the promised gifts of God. This will be done if the following conditions are fulfilled:
- our understanding is fixed by faith towards God;
- we earnestly seek the things which are in harmony with His blameless will;
- we follow the way of truth, casting away from us all unrighteousness and iniquity, along with all covetousness, strife, evil practices, deceit, whispering and evil - speaking, all hatred of God, pride and haughtiness, vain glory and ambition. (61)

Chapter 36: All blessings are given to us through Christ

In this way, we find our Saviour even Jesus Christ, the High Priest of all our offerings, the defender and helper of our infirmity. By Him, we look up to the heights of heaven and behold His immaculate and most excellent visage. By Him, the eyes of our hearts are opened. By Him, our foolish and darkened understanding blossoms us anew towards His marvellous light. By Him, the Lord willed that we should take the knowledge of immortality. Christ is the brightness of His majesty, is by so much greater than the angels. (62) God said that He has begotten His Son and "...will make the nations your inheritance, the ends of the earth your possession." (63). God also said His Son to sit on His right "until I make thine enemies Thy footstool." (64)

Chapter 37: Christ is our leader and we are His soldiers

All Christians should act with all energy in accordance with His holy commandments. The Christians act as one body and each in his own rank performs the orders of the King and generals. From the mutual integration of the small and the great arises mutual advantage. All work together harmoniously, under a common rule, for the preservation of the entire body.

Chapter 38: Let the members of the Church submit themselves and no one exalt himself above the other

The body of the Church would be preserved in Jesus Christ. Everyone should be subject to his neighbour, according to the special gift bestowed on him. Let the strong not despise the weak and let the weak show respect to the strong. Let the rich provide the wants of the poor and let the poor bless God because God has given him one by whom his need may be supplied. Let the wise man display his wisdom not only by words but through good deeds. Let the humble not bear testimony to himself but leave witness to be borne to him by another. (65) Let the pure in flesh not grow proud of it and boast, knowing that there is another who

bestowed on him the gift of continence. We should consider of what matter we were made "…in the secret place, ….in the depths of the earth." (66) Since we receive all things from Him, we ought to thank Him and glorify Him for everything, for ever and ever.

Chapter 39: There is no reason for self - conceit

The Christian believers are mocked and derided by foolish and inconsiderate persons, who are eager to exalt themselves in their own conceits. What can do a mortal man, made out of dust? Such a creature can be counted as blameless in his deeds as he charged with perversity even the angels of God? They perished because they could not furnish assistance to themselves and had no wisdom. Wrath destroys the foolish and envy kills the one in error. They will not be delivered from evil. (67)

Chapter 40: Let us preserve in the Church the order appointed by God

Since these things are shown to us and since we look into the depths of divine knowledge, it behoves to do all things in their proper order. Therefore, those who present their offerings at the appointed times are accepted and blessed. The peculiar services assigned to the high priest and their special ministrations devolve on the Levites.

Chapter 41: Continuation of the same subject

Every person should thank God and live in His order, in all good conscience, with becoming gravity and without exceeding the rule of the ministry prescribed to him. Daily sacrifices are offered only at he altar before the Temple in Jerusalem. Those who do anything beyond the agreeable to His will are punished with death. The greater is the knowledge vouchsafed to us, the greater is also the danger to which we are exposed.

Chapter 42: The order of the ministers in the Church

The apostles have preached the Gospel from Jesus Christ, who has done so from God. Therefore, Christ was sent forth by God and the apostles were sent by Jesus Christ. Both things were done in an orderly way, according to the will of God. Having received their orders, being fully assured by the resurrection of Jesus Christ and confirmed in the Word of God, with full assurance of the Holy Ghost, the apostles went forth proclaiming that the Kingdom of God was at hand. Preaching through countries and cities, the apostles were proved by the Spirit to be bishops and deacons of the future believers. That was not a new thing since it was written many ages before the bishops and deacons. (68)

Chapter 43: Moses of old stilled the contention which arose concerning the priestly dignity

Moses knew in advance about the contention concerning the priestly dignity and acted to avoid sedition in Israel and to glorify for eternity the name of the true

and only God. It a wonder that the Christians entrusted their ministers according to the rules given by God, having in mind the dander of sedition. (69)

Chapter 44: The ordinance of the apostles that there might not no contention about the priestly office

The apostles knew, through our Lord Jesus Christ, that there would not be strife on account of the office of the episcopate. For this reason, inasmuch as they had obtained a perfect foreknowledge of this question, they appointed the ministers already mentioned. Afterwards, they gave instructions that after death, other approved men should succeed them in their ministry. The church ministers who have blamelessly served the flock of Christ in a humble, peaceable and disinterested spirit and have possessed foe a long time the good opinion of all, cannot justly be dismissed from the ministry. It will not be a small sin if those who have blamelessly and holily fulfilled their duties will be ejected from the episcopate. Nevertheless, we see people who have behaved excellently had been removed from the ministry.

Chapter 45: It is part of the wicked to vex the righteous

People are fond of contention and full of zeal for things which do not pertain to salvation. People should carefully consult the Holy Scriptures which are the true utterances of the Holy Spirit. Nothing unjust of counterfeit character is written in the Holy Scriptures. The righteous were not cast off by holy men. The righteous were persecuted only by the wicked. The righteous endured gloriously being cast in prison, stoned and slain by the accursed and by those who conceived an unrighteous envy against them. Was Daniel cast into the den of lions by people who feared God? (70) It was not those who observed the great and glorious worship of the Most High who shut in a furnace just and innocent people. (71) The people who did these things were hateful and full of all wickedness. They roused to such a fury that they did not know that the Most High is the Defender and Protector of all those who, with a pure conscience, venerate His all - excellent name. Those who endured with confidence those things are now the heirs of glory and honour and have been exalted eternally and made illustrious by God in their memorial.

Chapter 46: Let us cleave the righteous: your strife is pernicious

The previous cases demonstrate that we must cleave the innocent and righteous since they are elected by God. (72) Why are there strikes, tumults, division, schisms and wars among the Christians? (73) Why the Christians divide and tear in pieces the members of the Church of Christ and raise up strife against their own body? Why have the Christians reached such a hight of madness as to forget that "we are members one of another"? (74) It would have been better if the person by whom appear offences would not have been born rather than to have him cast a stumbling block before one of the elects of Jesus. (75)

Chapter 47: Your recent discord is worse than the former which took place in the times of Paul

Inspired by the Spirit, Paul the Apostle wrote to the people about himself as well as about Cephas and Apollos (76) because even then existed fractions among the Christians. This tendence of separation entailed less guilt upon the Christians inasmuch as these currents were oriented towards the Apostles who already had a high reputation and towards the man they had approved. Now we should reflect about who are those who have perverted you and damaged the renown of the Christian far - famed brothers love. It is highly disgraceful and unworthy of you Christianity that several people should engage in sedition against the presbyters. This rumour had reached many people, including those who not connected to the Christians. Through your infatuation, the name of the Lord in blasphemed.

Chapter 48: Let us return to the practices of brotherly love

Therefore, let us put an end to this state of things, with all haste. Let us fall down before the Lord, beseech Him with tears so that He will be mercifully reconciled to us and restore us tour seemly and brotherly love. This conduct is the gate to righteousness which is set open for the attainment of life. (77)
Many gates have been opened but this is the gate of righteousness in Christ by which are blessed all that have entered and have directed their way in holiness and righteousness, doing all things without disorder. The human creature should be faithful and wise in judging the words. The human creature should be pure in all his deeds; the more he seems superior to others, the more humble minded he ought to be. The human creature has to seek the common good of all and not merely his own advantage.

Chapter 49: The praise of love

He, who has love in Christ, should keep the commandments of Christ. Who can describe the blessed bond of the love of God? Who is able to tell the excellence of the beauty of the love of God? Who is able to tell the excellence of its beauty, as it ought to be told? The height to which love exalts is unspeakable. Love unites us to God. Love covers a multitude of sins. (78) Love is patient and kind, without envy, boast or pride. (79) In love, there is nothing basic or arrogant. Love does not admit schisms and does not produce any sedition; love does all things in harmony. By love, all the elect of God were made perfect; without love, nothing is well - pleased to God. In love, the Lord has taken us to Himself. On account of His love for us, Jesus Christ our Lord gave His blood for us by the will of God. Our Lord gave His flesh for our flesh and His soul for our souls.

Chapter 50: Let us pray to be thought worthy of love

Love is a great and wonderful thing but there is no declaration of its perfection. Only God decides who is fit to be found in this love. Therefore, let us pray and implore His mercy, that we may live blameless in love, free from all human partialities. Beginning from Adam, all generations have passed away but those who have been perfect in love through the grace of God, now have a place among the godly and shall be shown at the revelation of the Kingdom of Christ. (80) We are blessed if we keep the commandments of God in harmony of love and through love our sins may be forgiven to us. (81) This blessedness comes upon those who have been chosen by God through Jesus the Lord, to whom glory be for ever and ever.

Chapter 51: Let the partakers in strife acknowledge their sins

Let us implore forgiveness for all the transgressions we have committed against the adversary. The leaders of sedition disagreement ought to have respect for the common hope. Those who live in fear and love would prefer to be themselves involved in suffering rather than their neighbours. They prefer to bear themselves the blame rather the concord which has been well and piously handed down that we should suffer. It is better that a man should acknowledge his transgression rather than he should harden his heart. The hearts of those who stirred up sedition against Moses, the servant of God, were hardened and their condemnation was made manifest. They went down alive into Hades and death swallowed them. (82) Pharaoh with his army and all the princes of Egypt and the chariots with their riders were sunk in the depths of the Red Sea and perished (83) only for the reason that their foolish hearts were hardened, after so many signs and wonders had been wrought in the land of Egypt by Moses, the servant of God.

Chapter 52: Such a confession is pleasing to God

Nothing is needed or desired by God from anyone, with the exception of confession made to Him. (84)
The reason is that "…the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a broken and contrite heart". (85)

Chapter 53: The love of Moses towards his people

You understand the Scriptures and you have looked very earnestly into the oracles of God. You should remember those things. When Moses went up on the mountain, with fasting and humiliation, God told Moses that the people he brought out of Egypt have committed inequity, departed from the way God commanded them to walk and made themselves molten images. (86) God asked Moses to let him destroy them and create a great and wonderful nation, much more numerous than the present one. Moses answered that he asks the pardon of the sin for his people. (87) Moses should be praised for his marvellous love and insuperable perfection. The servant speaks freely to his Lord, asks forgiveness for his people and begs that he will perish along with them.

Chapter 54: He who is full of love will incur every loss, that peace may be restored to the Church

Who among you is noble minded, compassionate and full of love? Let him declare: "If on my account sedition and disagreements and schism have arisen, I will depart, I will go away anywhere. You desire and I will do whatever the majority commands; only let the flock of Christ live on terms of peace with the presbyters set over it." He that acts thus shall procure to himself great glory in the Lord; every place will welcome him. For "the earth is the Lord’s and everything in it, the world and all who live in it." (88)

Chapter 55: Examples of such love

We should bring some examples from among the heathens. In times of pestilence, many kings and princesses were instructed by an oracle and have given themselves up to death, in order to deliver their fellow citizens by their own blood. Many have departed from their own cities so that no sedition might appear. Many among us have given up themselves in bonds, in order to ransom others. Many have surrendered themselves to slavery in order to provide food to others with their own price. Judith and Esther are examples of women who endangered themselves in order to deliver the twelve tribes of Israel impending destruction. (89)

Chapter 56: Let us admonish and correct one another

Let us pray for those who have fallen into any sin that meekness and humility may be given to them so that they may submit to the will of God. Thus, they will secure a fruitful and perfect remembrance from us in our prayers and our mentions of them to the saints. Let us receive correction and thus no one should feel displeased. The exhortations by which we admonish one another are good in themselves and highly profitable, because they tend to unite us to the will of God. (90)

Chapter 57: Let the authors of sedition submit themselves

Those who laid the foundations of this sedition have to submit themselves to the presbyters and accept correction for the sake of their repentance. They must learn to subject themselves and leave aside pride and self - confidence. For those who created sedition, it is better to have a humble but honourable place in the flock of Christ than to be ousted from the hope of the people of Christ. The all - virtuous wisdom tells that. (91)

Chapter 58: Blessings sought for all that call upon God

God sees all things and is the Ruler of all spirits and the Lord of all flesh. God has chosen our Lord Jesus Christ and through Him has chosen us to be a peculiar people. (92) May God grant to every soul that calls upon His glorious and holy name faith, fear, peace, patience, long - suffering, self - control, purity and sobriety to the well - pleasing of His name, through our High Priest and Protector, Jesus Christ, by whom be to Him glory, majesty, power, honour, now and forever.

Chapter 59: The Corinthians are exhorted speedily to send backword that peace has been restored

The Corinthians should send back the messengers speedily and with joy and they should announce the peace and harmony which were earnestly desired.

Notes

1. *The Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 1 ff.
2. Epistle to the Ephesians 5:21; 1 Peter 5:5
3. Acts 20:35: "In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words of Lord Jesus himself said: *It is more blessed to give than to receive.*"
4. 1 Peter 2:17: "Show proper respect to everyone: Love the brotherhood of believers, fear God, honour the king."
5. Titus 3:1
6. Proverbs 7:3
7. J. A. F. Gregg (ed.), *The Wisdom of Solomon*, (Cambridge: University Press, 1909), 2:24, p. 22 [AT]
8. Genesis 4:3-8
9. Genesis 22:41
10. Genesis 37
11. Exodus 2:14
12. Numeri 12: 14, 15
13. Numeri 16:33
14. 1 Kings 18:8
15. Genesis 2:23
16. Genesis 7; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 2:5
17. Jonah 3
18. Ezekiel 33:11
19. Ezekiel 28:30
20. Isaiah 1: 16 - 20
21. Genesis 5:24, Hebrews 11:5
22. Isaiah 41:8, 2 Chronicles 20:7, James 2:23, Judith 8:19 (deuterocanonical)
23. Genesis 12:1-3, Genesis 13:14-16, Genesis 15:5, Romans 4:3
24. Genesis 21:22; Hebrews 11:17
25. Genesis 19; 2 Peter 2:69
26. Joshua 2; Hebrews 11:31
27. Jeremiah 9:23 - 24; 1 Corinthians 1:31; 2 Corinthians 10:17
28. Matthew 6:12 - 15; 7:2; Luke 6: 36 - 38
29. Isaiah 66:2
30. Proverbs 2:21,22
31. Psalms 37: 35 - 37
32. Isaiah 29:13; Psalms 62:4; Psalms 78:36,37; Psalms 31:18; Psalms 12:3 - 5; Matthew 15:8; Mark 7:6
33. Isaiah 53; Psalms 22: 6-8
34. 1 Kings 17 - 19; 2 Kings 1 - 2 [AT]
35. 2 Kings 2 - 13 [AT]
36. For example, Ezekiel 7 [AT]
37. Genesis 18:27
38. Exodus 3:11; 4:10
39. Psalms 51:1 - 17
40. Hebrews 12 [AT]
41. Proverbs 20:27
42. Hebrews 13:17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12,13
43. Psalms 34: 11 - 17; Psalms 32: 10

44. For the myth of the phoenix, see: J. S. Hill, The Phoenix, *Religion and literature*, v. 16 (1984), pp. 61 - 66; M. Burton, The Myth of the Phoenix, *Journal of Royal Society of Arts*, v. 109 (1961), pp. 382 - 386; Dougles J. McMillan, The Phoenix in the Western World from Herodotus to Shakespeare, *The D. H. Lawrence Review*, v. 5 (1972), pp. 238 - 267; M R. Niehoff, The Phoenix in the Rabbinic Literature, *Harvard Theological Review*, v. 89 (1996), pp. 245 - 265. [AT]
45. Psalms 28:7; Psalms 3:6; Job 19: 25, 26
46. Wisdom 12:12, 11:22. The citations are taken from the apocryphal book entitled *Wisdom of Solomon*. See: L. L. Grabbe (ed.), *Wisdom of Solomon*, (London: T. & T. Clark International, 2003) [AT]
47. Psalms 19: 1-3
48. Psalms 139: 7-10
49. Deuteronomy 32:8,9
50. Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5
51. Genesis 24:1; James 2:21 - 24 [AT]
52. Genesis 22 [AT]
53. Genesis 27; James 2:21 [AT]
54. Romans 9:5
55. Genesis 22:17; Genesis 28:4
56. Genesis 1:26, 27
57. Isaiah 40:10; Isaiah 62:112; Revelation 22:11
58. Daniel 7:10
59. Isaiah 6:3
60. 1 Corinthians 2:9
61. Romans 1:32; cf. Psalms 50:16 - 23
62. Hebrews 1: 3,4
63. Psalms 2:7,8; Hebrews 1:5
64. Psalms 110:1; Hebrews 1:13
65. Cf. Proverbs 27:2
66. Psalms 139:15
67. Job 4: 16 - 21; Job 5: 1 - 5; Job 15:15
68. Cf. Isaiah 54 [AT]
69. Numeri 17
70. Daniel 6:16
71. Daniel 3:20
72. Psalms 18: 25 - 26
73. Cf. Ephesians 4:4 - 6
74. Romans 12:5
75. Cf. Matthew 18:6; Matthew 26:14; Mark 9:42; Luke 17:2
76. 1 Corinthians 30:13
77. Psalms 118:19 - 20
78. James 5:20; 1 Peter 4:8
79. 1 Corinthians 13:4 - 6 [AT]
80. Cf. Isaiah 26:20
81. Psalms 32:1 - 2
82. Numeri 16
83. Exodus 14
84. Psalms 69: 31 - 32; Psalms 50: 14 - 15
85. Psalms 51:17
86. Exodus 32:7; Deuteronomy 9:12

87. Exodus 32:9
88. Psalms 24:1; 1 Corinthians 10: 26, 28
89. For Judith, see, for example: Edgar J. Goodspeed (ed.), *The Apocrypha*, (NY: Vintage Books, 1989), p. 131 ff.; for Esther, see, for example: Fr. W. Schultz (ed.), *The Book of Esther, Theologically and Homiletically Expounded*, (NY: Scribner, 1877) [AT]
90. Psalms 118:18; Proverbs 3:12, Hebrews 12:6; Psalms 141:5; Job 5:17 - 26
91. Proverbs 1:23 - 31
92. Cf. Titus 2:14

The Second Epistle of Clement (1)

Chapter 1: We ought to think highly of Christ

It is fitting that we should think of Jesus Christ as of God, as the judge of the living and the dead. We should not think lightly about Him because we will receive from Him only a small part. Those who are careless of these things commit sin by ignoring by whom we have been called, where we have been called and how much

Jesus Christ submitted to suffer for our sake. We must return to Jesus Christ for the light He has given us, for the denomination of *sons* He gave us and for His salvation, when we were near to perish. At that time, we were deficient in understanding, worshipping stones and wood, gold, silver and brass. Our whole life was nothing but death. We were involved in blindness, with darkness before our eyes; we have received sight from Him, as He lay aside the cloud which covered us. Jesus Christ had compassion for the humans and saved them mercifully, observing the numerous errors in which they were entangled and the destruction to which they were exposed as humans had no hope for Salvation, unless it came from Him. Jesus called us when we were not and willed that we should attain a real existence from vide. (2)

Chapter 2: The Church, formerly barren, is now fruitful

The author claims that: 1) The Church was barren before children were given to it; (3) 2) we should offer our prayers to God and we should not show signs of weakness; 3) the number of believers increased. Jesus Christ did not come to call the righteous but the sinners. (4) This means that those are perishing must be saved. It is admirable to establish not the standing things but the falling ones. Jesus Christ also desired to save the perishing. (5)

Chapter 3: The duty of confessing Christ

Jesus Christ has displayed great mercy towards us. The living people should not offer sacrifices to dead deities. Only through Jesus Christ we should reach the knowledge of the true Father. We should not deny Jesus Christ, by whom this knowledge had been attained. Jesus Christ declares: "Whoever acknowledges me before man, I will also acknowledge him before my Father in heaven." (6) Our reward is to confess Him by whom we have been saved. We shall confess Him by doing what he says and by honouring Him not only with our life but with all our heart and all our mind. (7) For He says in Isaiah: "This people honours me with their lips but their heart is far from me." (8)

Chapter 4: True confession of Christ

We should not call Jesus Christ Lord. Jesus Christ says: "Not everyone who says to me Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven." (9) We should confess Jesus Christ by our works, by loving one another, by not committing adultery, by speaking evil of one another or by cherishing envy. We should confess Jesus Christ by being moderate, compassionate and good. We also ought to sympathize one with the other and not be avaricious. By those behaviours we should confess Him and not those of an opposite kind. We should rather fear God and not humans. If humans do such wicked things, God will order them off since they are workers of iniquity. (10)

Chapter 5: This world should be despised

As we are leaving willingly our sojourn in the present world, we should do the will of God who called us and not fear to depart from this world. The Lord says: "I am sending you out like sheep among wolves." (11) Jesus said: "Do not be afraid of

those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell." (12) We should consider that the sojourning of the flesh in this world is brief and transient. We shall reach the benefits of the future kingdom and eternal life by leading a holy and righteous life and by deeming these worldly things as not belonging to us and by limiting our desires upon them. If we desire to possess them, we fall away from the path of righteousness.

Chapter 6: The present and the future worlds are enemies

It is unprofitable for us to serve both God and rapaciousness. "What good will be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet he forfeits his soul?" (13) The present world and the next world are enemies. The present world urges to adultery, corruption, avarice and deceit; the future world bids farewell to these things. Therefore, we cannot be friends with both. We accept it is better to hate things present since they are trifling, transient and corruptible and it is better to love the things of the future, which are good and incorruptible. If we will obey the will of Christ, we will find rest; otherwise, nothing will deliver us from the eternal punishment. Only righteousness can save humanity. (14) Deliverance can be obtained only by keeping baptism holy and undefiled. We can be defended by our apologists if we are found possessed by works of holiness and righteousness.

Chapter 7: We must strive in order to be crowned

As many as possible must strive so that we may be crowned or, at least, come close to it. At the end of times, those who rebelled against God will be the loathsome to all mankind. (15)

Chapter 8: The necessity of repentance

As long as we are upon earth, we should practice repentance with our whole heart. While we are in this world, we may be saved by the Lord while we have an opportunity of repentance. After we have gone from this worlds, we have no further power to confess or repent. By accomplishing the will of our Father, by keeping the flesh holy and by observing the commandments of God, we shall obtain eternal life.

Chapter 9: We shall be judged in the flesh

The living human being was saved and received sight while he was in flesh. Therefore, we must preserve the flesh as Temple of God. We were called in the flesh and will be judged in the flesh. Jesus Christ, the Lord who saved us, was at first a spirit, became flesh and thus called us; so, we shall receive the reward in this flesh. Therefore, let us love one another so we may attain to the Kingdom of God. While we have an opportunity of being healed, let us yield ourselves to God that health us and recompense Him. Repentance comes out of a sincere heart. God knows all things beforehand and is acquainted with all that is in our hearts. Therefore, let us give Him praise with the heart that He may accept us as sons. "For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother and sister and mother." (16)

Chapter 10: Vice is to be forsaken and virtue followed

In order to live, let us return to the will of the Father, who called us. Let us earnestly follow virtue and forsake every wicked tendency which would lead us into transgression. We must flee from ungodliness, lest evils overtake us. If we are diligent in doing good, peace will follow us. Humans cannot find peace when they are influenced by human terrors and prefer present enjoyment rather than the promise which shall be afterwards fulfilled because they do not know what torment incurs or what felicity is involved in the future promise. Now they persist in imbuing innocent souls with their pernicious doctrines, not knowing that they shall receive a double condemnation, both they themselves and those that hear them.

Chapter 11: We ought to serve God, trusting in His promises

Therefore, let us serve God with a pure heart and we shall be righteous. If we do not serve God, we shall be miserable. Let us not be of a double mind. Let us hope and endure and so we will also obtain the reward. If we shall do righteousness in the sight of God, we shall enter into His Kingdom and shall receive the promises.

Chapter 12: We are constantly to look for the Kingdom of God

Hour by hour, we should expect the Kingdom of God in love and righteousness, since we do not know in which day God will appear. The Lord said that the King of God will come when all will be united in one. (17)

Notes

1. *The Epistle of Clement to the Corinthians* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 51 ff.
2. Hosea 12:23; Romans 4:17; Romans 29:25
3. Isaiah 54:1
4. Matthew 9:13; Luke 5:32
5. Cf. Matthew 18:11
6. Mathew 10:32
7. Cf. Matthew 22:37
8. Isaiah 29:13
9. Matthew 7:21
10. Matthew 7:23; Luke 13:27
11. Matthew 10:16
12. Matthew 10:28, Luke 12: 4 - 5
13. Matthew 16:26
14. Ezekiel 14:14, 20
15. Isaiah 66:24
16. Matthew 12:50

17. For the continuation of the argument, see Clement od Alexandria, *The Stromata* III, 9 in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Fathers* (Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson 1885, 2004), v. 1 p. 271 ff; cf.: A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *The Ante - Nicene Christian Library*, v. 12 *The writings of Clement of Alexandria: Miscellanies*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1869), pp. 84 ff. [AT]

Epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians (1)

Polycarp and the presbyters with him to the Church of God sojourning in Philippi: mercy to you and peace from Almighty God and from the Lord Jesus Christ, our saviour, be multiplied.

Chapter 1: Praise of the Philippians

Polycarp greatly rejoiced with the Philippians in the Lod Jesus Christ because the Philippians followed the example of true love which was displayed by God. As suitable for the Philippians, they have accompanied those bound in chains, the fitting ornaments of the saints and the diadem of the true elect of God and our Lors. The enjoyment with the Philippians is also the result of the strong root of their faith, spoken about (2) in long days gone by and which lasts until the present day and brings forth fruit to Lord Jesus Christ, who suffered even death for our sins "But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him." (3) "Though you have not seen him, you love him and even though you do not see him now, you believe in him and are filled with an inexpressible and glorious joy". (4) Many desire to enter this joy, knowing that "…it is by grace you have been saved through faith…not by works…"(5) but the will of God through Jesus Christ.

Chapter 2: An Exhortation to virtue

Wherefore, "Serve God in fear" (6) and truth, as those who have forsaken the vain, empty talk and error pf the multitude and "believed in Him who raised up our Lord Jesus Christ from the dead and gave Him glory" (7) and a throne at His right hand. He who raised Him up from the dead will raise up us also, if we do His will, walk in His commandments and love what He loved, keeping ourselves from all unrighteousness, covetousness, love of money, evil - speaking, false - witness, not rendering "evil for evil or insult for insult" (8), or blow for blow or cursing for cursing but being mindful of what the Lord said in His preaching: "Do not judge or you too will be judged" (9), forgive and you will be forgiven (10), be merciful and you may obtain mercy (11), be merciful and you my obtain mercy (12). "In the same way you judge others you will be judged and with the measure in use, it will be measured to you." (13) "Blessed are those who are persecuted because of their righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven." (14)

Chapter 3: Expressions of personal unworthiness

Polycarp explains that what he wrote about righteousness is not because he took anything upon himself but because the people invited him. The author considers that he or any other similar person cannot reach the wisdom of the blessed and glorified Paul. When he was among the people, Paul taught accurately and steadfastly the word of truth in the presence of those alive. When he was away, Paul wrote letters which are a modality of building in the people the faith which had been given up. Followed by hope and precede by love to God, Christ and our neighbour, this faith is the "mother of all". (15) If anyone would be inward possessed by these graces, he would fulfil the command of righteousness since he, who has love, is far from all sin.

Chapter 4: Various exhortations

"The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil". (16) Knowing that we did not bring anything into the world, we cannot carry out anything. (17) Thus, we should armour ourselves with the armour of righteousness and, first of all, we should teach ourselves to walk in the commandments of the Lord. Next, we should teach our wives to walk in the faith given to them and on love and purity loving their own husbands in all truth and loving all others in all chastity. We should also teach the wives to train up children in the knowledge and fear of God. We should teach the widows to be discreet and respect the faith of the Lord, praying continually (18) for all being far from all slandering, evil - speaking, false - witnessing and every kind of evil, knowing that they are the altars of God, that He clearly perceives all things and nothing is hidden from Him, neither reasonings, reflections nor any secret things of the heart.

Chapter 5: The duties of deacons, youths and virgins

As we know, "God cannot be mocked" (19), we ought to walk worthy of His commandments and glory. Similarly, the deacons should be blameless before the face of His righteousness, as servants of God and Christ and not as servants of humans. They must not be slanderous, double - tongued (20) or lovers of money but temperate in all things, compassionate, industrious, acting according to the truth of the Lord, who came to serve. (21) If we please God in the present world, we shall receive also the future world. God has promised humans that He will raise them from the dead. God also promised humans that, if they live worthy of Him, provided only that they believe. (22) Likewise, the young men should also be blameless in all things, being especially careful to preserve purity and keep themselves away from every kind of evil. It is desirable that "as aliens and strangers in the world, to abstain from sinful desires, which war against your soul." (23) The wicked, immoral, idolaters, adulterers and thieves will not inherit the kingdom of God. (24) Consequently, it is needful to abstain from all that, being subject to the presbyters and deacons, as unto God and Christ. The virgins must also walk in a blameless and pure conscience.

Chapter 6: The duties of presbyters and others

The presbyters must be compassionate and merciful to all. They must bring back the wonderers, they must visit all the sick and not neglect the widow, the orphan or the poor. They always must provide for that which is becoming in the sight of God and men. (25) They always must abstain from being angry, they must respect persons and they must avoid unjust judgement.

The presbyters must avoid all covetousness. They must not quickly credit any evil report on anyone; they must be severe in judgement, knowing that we are all under a debt of sin. If we ask the Lord to forgive us, we ought ourselves to forgive because we are before the eyes of our Lors and God, we must appear at the judgement seat of Christ and everyone must give an account of himself. (26) Let us, then, serve the Lord in fear and with all the reverence as He commanded us, as the apostles who preached the Gospel unto us and the prophets who claimed beforehand the coming of the Lord. Let us be zealous in the pursuit of what id good, abstaining ourselves from causes of offence, from false brethren and from those who bear in hypocrisy the name of the Lord and draw away in error vain men.

Chapter 7: Avoid the instructors (*docetae*) and persevere in fasting and prayer

"…every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus is not from God. This is the spirit of the antichrist." (27) Whosoever does not confess the testimony of the martyrdom of the cross is of the devil. Whosoever perverts the oracles of the Lord to his own lusts and says that there is neither a resurrection nor a judgement is the first - born of Satan. Therefore, forsaking the vanity of many and their false doctrines, let us return to the word which has been handed down to us from the beginning: watching unto prayer (28) and persevere in fasting; beseeching in our supplications the all - seeing God, not to lead into temptation, as the Lord said: "Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing but the body is weak." (29)

Chapter 8: Persevere in hope and patience

Let us then preserve in our hope and the earnest of our righteousness which is Jesus Christ "who bore our sins in His own body on the tree" (30), who did no sin, neither guile was found in His mouth (31) but endured all things for us, that we might live in Him. (32) Let us then be the imitators of His patience; if we suffer (33), let us glorify Him. He has set up this example (34) and we have believed that such is the case.

Chapter 9: Patience inculcated

The author exhorts the audience to yield obedience to the word of righteousness and to the exercise of the whole patience, as in the cases of Ignatius, Zosinus, and Rufus as well as in other instances, such as Paul and all the other apostles. The audience should do that in the assurance that all these did not occur (35) in vain but in faith and righteousness and that now they are in their due place. In the presence of the Lord, with whom they also suffered. They do not love the present world but they love Him, who died for us and for our sakes was raised from the dead by God.

Chapter 10: Exhortation to the practice of virtue (36)

The author calls the public to stand fast in those things and follow the example of the Lord, being firm and unchangeable in faith, loving the brotherhood (37), being joined together in truth, exhibiting the meekness of the Lord in the reciprocal intercourse and despising no one. When a good action can be taken, the Christians should not defer from it. The author calls the audience to subject one to the other (38) with blameless conduct among the Gentiles (39) so that the believers may receive praise for the good works and the Lord may not be blasphemed through the believers. The person by whom the name of the Lord is mourned should be blasphemed. (40) Therefore, the author tells his audience to teach sobriety to all and show it also in the personal conduct.

Chapter 11: Expression of grief on account of Valens

Once Valens was a presbyter but did not understand correctly his place in the Church. The author is deeply grieved for Valens and his wife, wishing that God may grant them true repentance. The author calls his audience to be moderate in this matter and "…not count such as enemies" (41) but call them back as suffering and straying members. Thus, the members of the audience may save their whole body and shall edify themselves. (42)

Chapter 12: Exhortation to various graces

It is declared in the Holy Scripture: "In your anger do not sin" (43) and "26. In your anger do not sin. Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, 27. and do not give the devil a foothold." (44) May God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ and Jesus Christ Himself, who is the Son of God and our everlasting High Priest, build you up in faith and truth and in all meekness, gentleness, patience, long - suffering, forbearance and purity; and let Him bestow on you a lot and portion among His saints and on all that are under heaven who shall believe in our Lord Jesus Christ and in His Father, "who raised Him from the dead". (45) Pray for the kings, potentates, princes and for those that persecute and hate you (46) and for the enemies of the Cross, that your fruit may be manifest to all and you may be perfect in Him.

Chapter 13: Concerning the transmission of epistles

The author claims that he sent the Philippians all the epistles of Ignatius which treat faith and patience as well as all things that tend to the edification of the Lord.

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Notes

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2. Philippians 1:5
3. Acts 2:24
4. 1. Peter 1:8
5. Ephesians 2:8 - 9
6. Psalms 2:11
7. 1 Peter 1:21
8. 1 Peter 3:9
9. Matthew 7:1
10. Matthew 6:12,14; Luke 6:37
11. Luke 6:36
12. Luke 6:36
13. Matthew 7:2; Luke 6:38
14. Matthew 5:10; Luke 6:20
15. Cf. Galatians 4:26
16. 1 Timothy 6:10
17. 1 Timothy 6:7
18. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
19. Galatians 6:7
20. Cf. Timothy 3:8
21. Cf. Matthew 20:28
22. 2 Timothy 2:12
23. 1 Peter 2:11
24. 1 Corinthians 6:9 - 10
25. Romans 12:17
26. Romans 14:10 - 12; 2 Corinthians 5:10
27. 1 John 4:3
28. 1 Peter 4:7
29. Matthew 26:41; Mark 14:38
30. 1 Peter 2:24
31. 1 Peter 2:22
32. Cf. 1 John 4:9
33. Cf. Acts 5:41; 1 Peter 4:16
34. Cf. 1 Peter 2:21
35. Philippians 2:16; Galatians 2:2
36. Chapters 10 - 13 are preserved only in a Latin version.
37. Cf. 1 Peter 2:17
38. Cf. 1 Peter 5:5
39. 1 Peter 2:12
40. Isaiah 52:5
41. 2 Thessalonians 3:15
42. Cf. 1 Corinthians 12:36
43. Psalm 4:4
44. Ephesians 4: 26 - 27
45. Galatians 1:1
46. Matthew 5:44

The Encyclical Epistle of the Church of Smyrna concerning the martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp (1)

The Church of God which sojourns at Smyrna, to the Church of God sojourning at Philomelium (2) and to all the congregations of the Holy and Catholic Church in every place: Mercy, peace and love from God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, be multiplied.

Chapter 1: The subject about which we write

Polycarp ended the persecution and sealed it by his martyrdom. Almost all the previous events took place so that the Lord may show us from above a martyrdom becoming a gospel. Polycarp wanted to be delivered up, even as the Lord has done, that we may become his followers. We look not merely at what concerns ourselves but we also have regard to our neighbours. It is part of a true and well - founded love to wish one’s self to be saved, but also all the brethren.

Chapter 2: The wonderful constancy of the martyrs

All the martyrdoms which took place according to the will of God were blessed and noble. We profess greater piety than others and it becomes to us to ascribe to God the authority over all things. Who can fail to admire the nobleness of mind of the martyrs, their patience and the love of God which they displayed? When they were so torn with scourges, the frame of their bodies was laid open, they still patiently endured, while those that stood by, pitied and bewailed them. They reached an immense pity so that no one of them escaped a sign or groan. Thus, they proved us that at the very time when they suffered such torments, those holy martyrs of Christ were absent from the body or rather that the Lord stood by them at the moment and communed with them. Looking to the grace of Christ, the martyrs despised all the torments of the world, redeeming themselves from the eternal punishment by the suffering of a single hour. For this reason, the fire of the savage executioners appeared to them cool. They kept before their eyes the escape from the eternal fire which is never to be quenched and looked forward with the eyes of their heart to those good things which are laid up for such as endure; things " No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love Him" (3) but were revealed by the Lord to them, inasmuch as they were no longer men but had already become angels. Similarly, those who were condemned to the wild beasts endured dreadful tortures, being stretched out upon beds full of spikes and subjected to various other torments so that, if possible, the tyrant might lead them to a denial of Christ by their lingering tortures.

Chapter 3: The constancy of Germanicus, the death of Polycarp is demanded

The devil invented many things against the Christians but, thanks to God, the devil could not prevail. The noble Germanicus (of Smyrna) fought heroically with the wild beasts. When the Roman consul sought to persuade him and urged him to take pity upon his age, Germanicus of Smyrna attracted the wild beasts towards

himself, desiring to escape all the more quickly from an impious an unrighteous and impious world. The whole multitude, marvelling at the nobility of mind displayed by the devout and godly race of the Christians, cried out: "Away with the atheists; let Polycarp be sought out!".

Chapter 4: Quintus the apostate

Quintus came from Phrygia only lately and became afraid when he saw the wild beasts. Quintus and some others forced themselves to come forward voluntarily for trial. After many entreaties, the proconsul persuaded him to swear and offer sacrifice. Therefore, we do not commend those who give up themselves to suffering and the Gospel does not teach us to do so. (4)

Chapter 5: The departure and vision of Polycarp

When the most admirable Polycarp first heard that he was sought of, he was definitely not disturbed and decided to continue in the city. Many wanted him remain but he was persuaded to leave the city. Polycarp moved to a country house, not far from the city. Together with several friends, he stayed there and engaged only in day and night prayer for all humans and churches throughout the world. Three days before he was taken, while praying, he had a vision and the pillow under his head seemed to him to be on fire. Turning to those who were with him, Polycarp told them prophetically: "I must be burnt alive".

Chapter 6: Polycarp is betrayed by a servant

In order to escape his followers, Polycarp moved to another dwelling. The followers captured two youths, tortured them and one of them confessed. Thus, Polycarp was found and Herod the Irenarch (5) brought him to the stadium. Polycarp’s enemies suspected that he might fulfil his special lot and be considered a partaker of Christ. They also suspected that those who betrayed him might be punished like Judas.

Chapter 7: Polycarp is found by his pursuers

On the day of preparation (i.e., Friday), his pursuers along with horsemen and youth went forth as if against a robber. (6) În the evening, they found Polycarp lying in the upper room of a little house. Polycarp could escape from there but refused saying: "The will of God be done". (7) Polycarp went down and spoke to his pursuers, who were marvelled by his age and constancy; they wondered about the struggle to capture such a venerable man. Polycarp ordered that food and drink should be given to the pursuers, hoping that they will allow him an hour to pray undisturbed. They granted him an hour of leave but he could not cease for another two hours. The pursuers who heard Polycarp were so astonished that many of them began to repent that they had come forth against an old man so godly and venerable.

Chapter 8: Polycarp is brought to the city

In his prayer, Polycarp mentioned all those that had come in contact with him: small and great, illustrious and obscure, the whole catholic Church in the world. After the prayer, came the time for his departure. The pursuers of Polycarp placed him on an ass and led him into the city, on the day of the great Sabbath. Herod the Irenarch and his father Nicetes took Polycarp into their chariot and sat on his sides. They tried to persuade Polycarp by asking him: "What harm is there in saying Lord Caesar and in sacrificing, with the other ceremonies observed on such occasions and so make sure of safety?" At first, Polycarp did not answer them but, as they continued to urge him, he said: "I shall not do as you advise me." As they had no hope to persuade him, they got him down from the carriage. Although Polycarp dislocated his leg by the fall from the chariot, he eagerly went forward with all the haste and was conducted to the stadium, where he could not be heard due to the great tumult.

Chapter 9: Polycarp refuses to revile Christ

As Polycarp entered the stadium, a voice from heaven came to him saying: "Be strong and show thyself a man, O Polycarp!" No one saw who spoke to him but the Christians also heard this voice. The tumult increases when the multitude heard that Polycarp was taken. The proconsul approached him and asked if he was Polycarp. The proconsul sought to persuade Polycarp to deny Christ. The consul told Polycarp: "Have respect for thy old age", "Swear by the fortune of Caesar, repent and say "Away with the atheists"", "Swear and I will set thee liberty, reproach Christ." Polycarp declared: "Eighty and six years have I served Him and He never did me any injury: how then can I blaspheme my King and my Saviour?"

Chapter 10: Polycarp confesses himself a Christian

Polycarp answered again to the proconsul: "…hear me with boldness, I am a Christian. If you wish to learn what the doctrines (8) of Christianity are, appoint me a day and you shalt hear them." The proconsul told Polycarp to persuade the people but Polycarp answered that we are taught all the due honour to the powers and authorities which are ordained by God but he did not consider that these were worthy of receiving.

Chapter 11: No threats have any effect on Polycarp

The proconsul told Polycarp to repent or else he will cast the wild beasts on him. Polycarp replied: "Call them for we are not accustomed to repent what is good in order to adopt that which is evil and it is well for me to be changed from what is evil to what is righteous." The proconsul said to Polycarp: "I will cause thee to be consumed by fire, seeing that you despise the wild beasts, if thou will not repent." Polycarp said: "You threaten with fire which fire burns for an hour and after a little is extinguished but you are ignorant of the fire of the coming judgement and of the eternal punishment reserved for the ungodly. But why do you delay? Bring forth what you want."

Chapter 12: Polycarp is sentenced to be burned

While he spoke these and many other similar things, Polycarp was filled with continuance and joy. The proconsul was astonished and sent his herald to proclaim thrice in the stadium: "Polycarp has confessed that he is a Christian." The heathen and the Jews from Smyrna cried out loudly with uncontrollable fury: "This is the teacher of Asia, the father of the Christians and the overthrower of our gods, he who has been teaching not to sacrifice or to worship our gods. "They besought Philip the Asiarch (9) to let loose a lion upon Polycarp. Philip answered that it was not lawful for him to do so because the shows of the wild beasts were already finished. Then, it seemed good to them to cry out with one consent that Polycarp should be burnt alive for thus it behoved the vision which was revealed to him, in regard to his pillow to be fulfilled when, seeing it on fire as he was praying, he turned about and said prophetically to the faithful that were with him: "I must be burnt alive."

Chapter 13: The funeral pile is erected

Immediately, the multitudes gathered wood and fagots from the shops and baths. According to the custom, the Jews eagerly assisted them. When the funeral pile was ready, Polycarp lay aside all his garments. On account of his holy life, he was adorned with every good even before his martyrdom. When they were about to fix him with his nails, Polycarp said: "Leave me as I am, for He that giveth me strength to endure the fire will also enable me, without your securing me by nails, to remain without moving in the pile."

Chapter 14: The Prayer of Polycarp

They did not nail him but simply bound him. Placing his hands behind and being bound like a distinguished ram taken out a great flock for sacrifice, Polycarp looked up to heaven and said: "O Lord God Almighty, the Father of Thy beloved and blessed Son Jesus Christ, by whom we have received the knowledge of "Thee, the God of angels and powers, and of every creature, and of the whole race of the righteous who live before thee, I give Thee thanks that Thou hast counted me worthy of this day and this hour, that I should have a part in the number of 'Thy martyrs, in the cup (10) of thy Christ, to the resurrection of eternal life, both of soul and body, imparted by the Holy Ghost. Among whom may I be accepted this day before Thee as a consistent and acceptable sacrifice, according as Thou, the ever-truthful? God, hast fore-ordained, hast revealed beforehand to me, and now hast fulfilled. Wherefore also I praise Thee for all things, I bless Thee, I glorify Thee, along with the everlasting and heavenly Jesus Christ, Thy beloved Son, with whom, to Thee, and the Holy Ghost, be glory both now and to all coming ages. Amen."

Chapter 15: Polycarp is not injured by the fire

When he had pronounced this amen, and so finished his prayer, those who were appointed for the purpose kindled the fire. And as the flame blazed forth in great fury,' we, to whom it was given to witness it, beheld a great miracle, and have been preserved that we might report to others what then took place. For the fire, shaping itself into the form of an arch, like the sail of a ship when filled with the wind, encompassed as by a circle the body of the martyr. And he appeared within

not like flesh which is burnt, but as bread that is baked, or as gold and silver glowing in a furnace. Moreover, we perceived such a sweet odour [coming from the pile], as if frankincense or some such precious spices had been smoking there.

Chapter 16: Polycarp is pierced by a dagger

At length, when those wicked men perceived that his body could not be consumed by the fire, they commanded an executioner to go near and pierce him through with a dagger. As the piercer did that, there came forth a dove, and a great quantity of blood, so that the fire was extinguished. All the people wondered that there should be such a difference between the unbelievers and the elect, of whom this most admirable Polycarp was one, having in our own times been an apostolic and prophetic teacher, and bishop of the catholic church which is in Smyrna. For every word that went out of his mouth either has been or shall yet be accomplished.

Chapter 17: The Christians are refused the body of Polycarp

But when the adversary of the righteous, the envious, malicious, and wicked one, perceived the impressive nature of Polycarp's martyrdom and considered the blameless life he had led from the beginning and that now he is crowned with the wreath of immortality, having beyond dispute received his reward, he did his utmost that not the least memorial of him should be taken away by us. Nevertheless, many Christians desired it as they also desired to become possessors of his holy flesh. For this end, the heathen suggested to Nicetes, the father of Herod and brother of Alce, to entreat the governor not to give up the body of Polycarp to be buried. They suspected that, being crucified, the Christians will begin to worship Polycarp. This he said at the suggestion and urgent persuasion of the Jews, who also watched us, as we sought to take him out of the fire, being ignorant of this, that it is neither possible for us ever to forsake Christ, who suffered for the salvation of such as shall be saved throughout the whole world ("the blameless one for sinners"), nor to worship any other. We adore Christ as the Son of God but the martyrs, as disciples and followers of the Lord, we worthily love on account of their extraordinary affection towards their own King and Master, of whom we also may be made companions and fellow disciples!

Chapter 18: The body of Polycarp is burned

Seeing the strife caused by the Jews, the centurion placed the body of Polycarp in the midst of fire and consumed it. Afterwards, we took up his bones, which were considered more precious than the most exquisite jewels and more purified than gold. We placed all the bones in a fitting place as the Lord will grant us to celebrate the anniversary of his martyrdom, both in memory of those who already have finished their course and for the exercising and preparation of those yet to walk in their steps.

Chapter 19: Praise of the martyr Polycarp

The blessed Polycarp was the twelfth martyred in Smyrna and has a place of its own in the memory of all men, inasmuch that he is spoken about everywhere by the heathens themselves. He was not merely an illustrious teacher but also a

prominent martyr, whose martyrdom all desired to imitate, being altogether consistent with the Gospel of Christ. By patience, Polycarp overcame the unjust governor and thus acquired the crown of immortality. With the apostles and all the righteous in heaven, he rejoicingly glorifies God the Father and blesses our Lord Jesus Christ the Saviour of our souls, the Governor of our bodies and the Sheperd of the Catholic Church throughout the world.

Chapter 20: The epistle is to be transmitted to the brethren

The Christians wanted to be acquainted with what took place. The present epistle was sent as a summary account. The Christians who have themselves read this epistle should send it to the brethren at a greater distance so they also may glorify the Lord, who makes such choice od His own servants. To Him who is able to bring us all by His grace and goodness' into His everlasting kingdom, through His only-begotten Son Jesus Christ, to Him be glory, and honour, and power, and majesty, for ever. Amen. Salute all the saints. They that are with us salute you and Evaristus, who wrote this epistle, with all his house.

Chapter 21: The date of the martyrdom (11)

Polycarp suffered martyrdom on the second day of the month of Xanthicus, the seventh day before the Calends of May, on the great Sabbath, at the eighth hour. Polycarp was taken by Herod, Philip the Trallian high priest and Statius Quadratus proconsul, Jesus Christ being the eternal King.

Chapter 22: Salutation

The blessed Polycarp suffered according to the example of following the steps of Jesus Christ. We wish you, brethren, all happiness while you walk according to the doctrine of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Notes

1. *The Encyclical Epistle of the Church of Smyrna concerning the martyrdom of the Holy Polycarp* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 79 ff.
2. Philomelium - city in Phrygia.
3. 1 Corinthians 2:9
4. Cf. Matthew 10:23: "When you are persecuted in one place, flee to another."
5. *Irenarch*, officer in the Greek empire holding the functions corresponding to those of a justice of peace.
6. Cf.: Matthew 26:55
7. Cf. Matthew 6:10; Acts 21:14
8. Cf. Romans 13:1 - 7; Titus 3:1
9. *Asiarch,* one or several civil and priestly officials in the Roman province of Asia who presided over the public games or religious rites.
10. Cf. Matthew 20:22; Mark 10:38
11. The chronology mentioned here is unclear. See: A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *op. cit.*, v. 1, p. 43, fn. 13.

The Epistle of Barnabas (1)

Chapter 1: After the salutation, the writer declares that he would communicate to his brethren something of that which he had himself received

Following the salutation, Barnabas says that, seeing the divine fruits of righteousness among his public, he most rejoices in their happy and honoured spirits due to the effect which had on them the engrafted spiritual gift which they received. Therefore, Barnabas enjoys more inwardly, hoping to be saved because he truly perceives in his public the Spirit poured forth from the rich Lord of love (in Latin: "a spirit infused into you from the honourable fountain of God."). The author declares that the greatly desired appearance has filled him with astonishment about the crowd. Therefore, the author also mentions that, on this account, he is fully convinced in his own mind that since he began to speak among them, he understands many things because the Lord has accompanied him in the way of righteousness. The author also mentions that, on this account, he is bound by the strictest obligation to love his audience above his own soul because the faith and love dwelling in them is great, while they hope for the life which He has promised. Therefore, Barnabas considers that, if there will be any trouble to his crowd with some part of what he has received personally, he will hasten to write to his listeners in order to make them have the perfect knowledge, along with their own faith. Thus, there are three doctrines of God: the hope of life, the beginning and the completion of life. The Lord made known to us by the prophets both the things which are past and present. Thus, the Lord gave us the first fruits of knowledge of things to come. As about the things which we see as accomplished, we ought to draw near to Him with reverence, with greater richness of faith and elevation of spirit. Barnabas declares, as part of the crowd and not as teacher, that he will set forth several things by which, in the current circumstances, the readers from the crowd will be rendered more joyful.

Chapter 2: The Jewish sacrifices are now abolished

In the present days of evil, the Satan has the power of this world. We ought to give heed to ourselves and inquire diligently into the ordinances of the Lord. Fear and patience are the helpers of our faith; long suffering and continuance are fighting on the side of humanity and along with them rejoice Wisdom, Understanding, Science and Knowledge. God revealed to us by all His prophets that He needs neither sacrifices, burnt offerings nor oblations. (2) Therefore, God abolished these things. The new law of Jesus Christ is without the yoke of necessity and might have a human oblation. God did not ask the forefathers (of the Jews - AT) to offer Him when they went out of Egypt. God did not ask the Jews to offer Him burnt offerings and sacrifices. God commanded that no one should cherish any evil in their heart against their neighbours and not to love "to swear falsely". (3) Therefore, being possessed by understanding, we ought to perceive the gracious

intentions of our Father, who desires that we should ask how we may approach Him, without going astray like them. (4) Thus, Barnabas claims that we ought to carefully inquire about our salvation, lest the wicked one, who penetrated deceitfully, should hurl us from our true life.

Chapter 3: The fasts of the Jews are not true fasts nor acceptable to God

God admonishes the Jews for their behaviour during the fasts because it is not consistent with the true intention of God. (5) "6. Is not this the kind of fating I have chosen: to loosen the chains of injustice and untie the cords the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? 7. Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter, when you see the naked to clothe him and not turn away from your own flesh and blood? 8. Then your light will break forth like the dawn and your healing will quickly appear; then your righteousness will go before you and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard. 9. Then you will call and the Lord will answer; you will cry for help and He will say: Here I am. If you do away with the yoke of oppression, with the pointing finger and malicious talk 10. And if you spend yourselves in behalf of the hungry and satisfy the needs of the oppressed, then your light will rise in the darkness and your night will become the noonday." (6) God revealed to the Christians all these things so that they will not rush forward as rash acceptors of the laws of the Jews.

Chapter 4: Antichrist is at hand: let us therefore avoid Jewish errors

We inquire much about the events at hand and therefore it is tight for us to search diligently into the things which may save us. Let us urgently flee from all the works of iniquity so these will not take hold of us; let us hate the error of the present so that we may set our love on the world to come; let us not give loose reins to our soul that it should have the power to run with all sinners and wicked, lest we become like them. (7) Considering himself a part of the crowd, Barnabas requests his audience, unlike others, to avoid the sin of saying "The Covenant is both theirs and ours." The Jews finally lost the Covenant after Moses received it. (8) Moses understood the meaning of God and cast the two tables out of his hands. The Jewish Covenant was broken so that the Covenant of the beloved Jesus should be sealed upon our heart, in the hope that flows from believing in Him. Having in mind the purification of the crowd, Barnabas writes them about his own opinions. In these last days, we take the earnest heed. The past time of faith will not produce any advantage unless, in the present times of danger, we also withstand the coming sources of danger, as becomes the sons of God. In order to prevent the devil from finding any means of entrance, we should flee from every vanity and utterly hate the works of every way of wickedness. Barnabas calls the audience not to live a solitary life, as if they were already justified. He calls his audience to come together in one place and inquire what tends the general welfare. The Scripture says: "Woe to those who are wise to themselves and prudent in their own sight." (9) Barnabas calls the crowd to be spiritually minded and be a perfect temple of God. As much as depends on the humans, they should meditate on the fear of God and keep His commandments so that His ordinances should be rejoiced. The Lord will judge the world and each person will receive according to his deeds, according to his righteousness or wickedness. We should consider that, as human beings, we should fall asleep in our sins and the wicked prince, acquiring power over us,

should thrust us away from the Kingdom of God. All the more we attend to this view when we reflect and behold that after so great signs and wonders were wrought in Israel, they were abandoned in the course of time. We should beware lest we be found fulfilling the principle "Many are invited but few are chosen." (10)

Chapter 5: The New Covenant, founded on the sufferings of Christ, tends to our salvation but to the destruction of the Jews

The Lord endured for this end to deliver His flesh to corruption so that we may be sanctified through the remission of sins, effected by His sprinkling blood. Concerning Him, with reference partly to Israel and partly to the Christians, it is written in the Scripture: "5. But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him and by his wounds we are healed." "7. He was oppressed and afflicted yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter and the sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth." (11) Therefore, we ought to be deeply grateful to the Lord because He has given us knowledge about things from the past, wisdom concerning things present and has not left us without understanding about the future. The Scripture says: "How useless to spread a net in full view of all birds." (12) This means that the human being who perishes justly is the one who rushes off in the way of darkness, having a knowledge of the way of righteousness. If the Lord (Jesus Christ) endured to suffer for our soul, he being Lord of the whole world and to whom God said at the genesis of the world "Let us make man after our image and after our likeness" (13), we should understand how it was that He endured to suffer at the hand of men. The prophets obtained grace from Him and prophesied about Him. He endured in order to fulfil the promise made unto the Fathers. By preparing a new people for Himself, He might show that He, when he raised up mankind, will also judge them. When He chose His apostles to preach His Gospel, He took them from among those who were sinners above all sin so that He might show that He came "not to call the righteous but the sinners to repentance." (14)

Chapter 6: The sufferings of Christ and the New Covenant were announced by the prophets

The author exposes here the idea that God intended to renew humanity due to the sinful behaviour of the Jews. God intends to create anew the human soul by His Holy Spirit. The renovation of humanity is to be realized by the Son Jesus Christ. Barnabas believes that the prophets announced Jesus Christ. (15)

Chapter 7: Fasting and the goat sent away were types of Christ

The Lord has foreshown us all things so that we may know to whom we ought to render for everything thanksgiving and praise. The Son of God is the Lord and He will judge the living and the dead. The Son of God suffered; His stroke might give us life. Therefore, we should believe that the Son of God could not have suffered except for our sakes. Barnabas claims that Jesus offers His flesh for the sins of His new people and that His people, who wish Him, must obtain Him through tribulations and suffering. (16)

Chapter 8: The red heifer a type of Christ (17)

The author claims that Israel was commanded that the most wicked men should offer, slay and burn a heifer. The ashes had to be sprinkled on the people so they should be purified from their sins. Actually, the calf is Jesus and the sinful offering it are those who led Him to the slaughter. The twelve men offering the victim are no longer considered victims and the three boys who springled the ashes are those who have proclaimed to us the remission of sins and the purification of hearts. The twelve correspond to the twelve tribes of Israel and the three sprinkler boys correspond to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, because these were great with God.

Chapter 9: The spiritual meaning of circumcision

Barnabas believes that the Lord spoke several times about our ears and how He has circumcised both our ears and our heart. The Lord says: "As soon as they hear me, they obey me; foreigners cringe before me." (18) Again, the Lord says: "You who are far away hear what I have done; you who are near, acknowledge my power." (19) The Lord says about circumcision: "Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, circumcise your hearts, you men of Judah and people from Jerusalem or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done - burn with no one to quench it." (20) The Lord also says: "Stand at the gate of the Lord's house and there proclaim this message: 'Hear the word of the Lord, all you people of Judah who come through these gates to worship the Lord.'" (21) The Spirit of the Lord proclaims: "11. Come my children, listen to me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord. 12. Whoever of you loves life, and desires to see many good days 13. Keep your tongue from evil and your lips from speaking lies." (22) Therefore, the Lord has circumcised the ears of human beings so that they might hear the word of the Lord and believe. The circumcision in which they believed in the past is abolished. The Lord declared that the circumcision was not of the flesh: "3. This is what the Lord says to the men of Judah and Jerusalem: 'Break up your unploughed ground and do not sow among thorns. 4. Circumcise yourselves to the Lord, circumcise your hearts you men of Judah and people of Jerusalem or my wrath will break out and burn like fire because of the evil you have done - burn with no one to quench.'" (23)

Chapter 10: Spiritual significance of the percept of Moses respecting different kinds of food

The Lord told Moses to say to the Israelites the reasons for the interdiction to eat swine, eagle, hawk and any fish unpossessed by the scales. (24) God told them: "Hear now, O Israel, the decrees and laws I am about to teach you. Follow them so that you may live and may go in and take possession of the land that the Lord, the God of your fathers, is giving you." (25) Moses spoke with a spiritual reference. The forbidden food made the people live in pleasure and forget their Lord. When the people consume the forbidden food, they live in pleasure and forget their Lord. When they come to want, they acknowledge the Lord. The interdiction to consume forbidden food is also intended to establish and increase the submission of the believers to God. (26) Barnabas claims that morality is connected to proper alimentation.

Chapter 11: Baptism and the cross prefigured in the Old Testament

We should further inquire whether the Lord took any care to foreshadow the water of baptism and the cross. It is written about the Israelites that they should not receive the baptism which leads to the remission but should procure another one for themselves. (27) The prophet says that the Lord will go before, will level mountains, break down the gates of bronze and cut through bars of iron; "I will give you the treasures of darkness, riches stored in secret places so that you may know that I am the Lord." (28) The prophet says that the King will be seen in His glory and the human soul will meditate on the fear of the Lord. (29) The Lord watches the way of the righteous believers in God and will make perish the wicked. (30) Every word originated from the believer in faith and love shall tend to bring to many conversion and life. The believers descended into the water full of sins and defilement but came up bearing the fruit in their heart, having in their spirit the fear of God and the belief in Jesus. (31) Who will eat of these fruits shall live for ever which means that whosoever will hear the message of God and will believe, shall live forever.

Chapter 12: The Cross of Jesus frequently announced in the Old Testament

Similarly, God points to the Cross of Christ in another prophet who says: "And when shall these things be accomplished? And the Lord says 'when a tree shall be bent down and again rise and when the blood shall flow out of the wood'". (32) Here again you have an intimation concerning the cross and the one who should be crucified. God speaks of this in Moses, when Israel was attacked by strangers. The Lord wanted to remind Israel that, when assailed, they were delivered to death on account of their sins. God spoke to the heart of Moses that he should make a figure of the Cross suffering there for, unless they trust in Him, they should be overcome forever. Therefore, Moses placed one weapon upon another in the midst of the hill and stood upon it so as to be higher than all people; he stretched forth his hands and thus Israel acquired again the mastery. But, when he let down his hands, they were again destroyed in order to make them know that they will not be saved unless they put their trust in God. (33) Again, here Moses is a kind of Jesus and signifies that it was necessary for him to suffer and be the author of the life of others. The transgression was committed by Eve by means of the serpent (34). The Lord made it understood that all kinds of serpents bit them and they died. (35) Moses commanded that the believers should not have any graven or molten image of God (36) because this might reveal a kind of Jesus. As he was told by God, Moses made then a brazen serpent and placed it on a pole, so that anyone bitten can look at it and live. (37) This is also an indication of the glory of Jesus because in Him and to Him all things are created. (38),
(39)

Chapter 13: Christians, not the Jews, the heirs of the Covenant

Let us see if the heir is this people (i.e. the Christians) or the former (i.e. the Jews) and to whom belongs the Covenant. We should hear what the Scripture says concerning the people. Isaac prayed for his wife Rebecca because she was barren and she conceived. (40) The Lord answered her prayer: "' Two nations are in your womb and two peoples from within you will be separated; one people will be

stronger than the other, and the older will serve the younger.'" (41) Joseph brought his God - given sons Manasseh and Ephraim to his father wishing that Manasseh to be blessed by him, because he was the elder. Joseph led the elder Manasseh to the right hand of his father in order to be blessed by him. Jacob saw in his mind the type of people to arrive afterwards. Jacob moved his hands and laid his right hand on the head of the younger Ephraim and blessed him. Joseph asked his father to remove his hands to his elder Manasseh but Jacob answered that he will not and the elder shall the younger, although the elder was also blessed. (42)
God has chosen Abraham because he strongly believed and was rewarded for his righteousness including by the birth of Israel. (43)

Chapter 14: The Lord has given us (i.e. the Christians) the Testament which Moses received and broke

The Lord has given us the Testament which Moses received and broke. God gave the Testament to the people (of Israel - [AT]) but they were not worthy to receive it, on account of their sins. After he stayed on the mountain forty days and forty nights (44), Moses received from the Lord two tablets of the testimony, "the tablets of stone inscribed by the finger of God." (45) and carried them down in order to give them to the people. God told Moses to go down quickly because his people had sinned and became corrupt. (46) Moses understood that, again, they made molten images. Moses threw the tablets out of his hands, breaking them to pieces at the foot of the mountain. (47) We (i.e. the Christians [AT] received the tablets of God. As a servant, Moses received the tablets but the Lord Himself, having suffered in our behalf, has given us the tablets so that we should be the people of the inheritance. The Lord was revealed in order to perfect the Jews of their iniquities and that the Christians, being constituted heirs through Him, might receive the Testament of Lord Jesus. The Testament was prepared for this end so that, by His personal manifestation, redeeming our hearts (which were already wastes by death) and given over to the iniquity of error from darkness, He might, by His word, enter into a covenant with us. Isaiah the prophet wrote how the Father, about to redeem us from the darkness, commanded Jesus to prepare a holy people for Himself. Thus, the prophet Isaiah declares: "6. 'I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness; I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and the light of the Gentiles, 7. To open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness'" (48) Then, you perceive whence we have been redeemed. Again, the prophet says what the Lord told him: "'It is too small a thing for you to be my servant, to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring my salvation to the ends of the earth.'" (49) Again, the prophet says: "1. The Spirit of the Sovereign Lord is on me because the Lord has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives and release from darkness for the prisoners, 2. To proclaim the year of the Lord’s favour and the day of the vengeance of our God, to comfort all who mourn 3. and provide for those who grieve in Zion - to bestow on them a crown of beauty instead of ashes.'" (50)

Chapter 15: The false and the true Sabbath

It is written in the Decalogue that God spoke face to face to Moses on Mount Sinai and told him about Sabbath: "Remember the Sabbath day by keeping it holy." (51) The Lord also said about Sabbath: "24. But if you are careful to obey me, declares the Lord, and bring no load through the gates of the city on the Sabbath but keep the Sabbath day holy by noy doing any work on it 25. Then the kings who sit on David's throne will come through the gates of this city with their officials…". (52) The Sabbath is part of the creation. (53) The expression "He finished in six days" implies that the Lord will finish all the things of creation in six thousand years because "a day" means for Him one thousand years (54) and all things will be finished in six thousand years. "And He rested on the seventh day." This means that when His Son will come again, He will destroy the time of the wicked man, will judge the ungodly, will change the sun, the moon and the stars and, on the seventh day, He will truly rest. Moreover, He says "Thou shall sanctify it with pure hands and a pure heart." Anyone can sanctify the day which God has sanctified only if this human being is pure in all things; otherwise, we are deceived. We will be able to sanctify righteousness only after we have sanctified ourselves. The Lord told the Jews: "13. …New Moons, Sabbaths and convocations - I cannot bear your evil assemblies. 14. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates." (55) This means that the Lord will make a new beginning of the world on the eighth day, which is also the day on which Jesus rose again from the dead and ascended in heavens.

Chapter 16: The spiritual temple of God

The wretched, wandering in error, did not believe that God Himself is the house of God; they believed that the temple is the house of God. Following the manner of the Gentiles, the Jews worshipped God in the temple. When the Lord abolished the temple, He asked: "Who has measured the waters in the hollow of his hand or with the breadth of his and marked off the heavens?" (56) The Lord also said: "Heaven is my throne and the earth is my footstool. Where is the house you will build for me and where will my resting place will be?" (57) It was revealed that the city, and the temple and the people of Israel were to be given up. (58) When the Israelites went to war, the destruction of the Temple by the enemies, occurred according to the prophecy. Now, the Israelites as servants of their enemies, will rebuild it. There is still a temple of God, where the Lord Himself declared that He would create it and finish it. (59) the author believes that a temple exists. We should learn how the temple will be built in the name of Lord. Before we believed in God, the habitation of our heart was corrupt and weak, being like a temple built by human hands. This temple was full of idolatry and demons. These things were opposed to the will of God. The true temple will be gloriously built in the name of the Lord. Having received the forgiveness of sins and having placed our belief in the name of the Lord, we became new creatures, created again from the beginning. Therefore, God truly dwells in us by His word of faith, His calling of promise, the wisdom of the statutes and the commands of the doctrine. The Lord Himself prophesises in us and is dwelling in us. The Lord opens the doors of the Temple to those who were enslaved by death. By giving us repentance, the Lord introduced us into the incorruptible Temple. The human being who wishes to be saved, does not look to man but to God who dwells in him, speaks in him; the human being is amazed that he never heard the Lord utter such words with His mouth and never desired to hear them. This is the spiritual Temple built for the Lord.

Chapter 17: Conclusion of the first part of the epistle

The author hopes, as far as possible, that he did not omit any question bearing on salvation. Writing about the future will not be understood by the public because such knowledge is hidden in the parable.

Chapter 18: Second part of the epistle. The two ways

Now, the author suggests to move to another sort of knowledge and doctrine. There are two ways of doctrine and authority: the way of light and the way of darkness and a great difference exists between them. The light - bringing angels of God are stationed over one way and over the other way are stationed the angels of Satan. (60) God is the Lord for eternity but Satan is prince for the time of iniquity.

Ch. 19: The way of light

Then, the way of light is as follows. If one desires to travel to the appointed place, he must be zealous in his works. Therefore, the knowledge granted to us for the purpose of walking in this way is the following:
- you shall love the Creator and glorify him because He redeemed from death;
- you shall be simple in heart and rich in spirit;
- you should not to those who work in the way of death;
- you should hate doing what is unpleasant to God and hate hypocrisy;
- you will not forsake the commandments of God;
- you will not exalt yourself but be of a lowly mind;
- you will not take evil council against your neighbour;
- you will not allow boldness to enter your soul;
- you will not commit fornication;
- you will not commit adultery;
- you will not be a corruption of youth;
- you will not allow the Word of God issue from your lips any kind of impunity;
- you will not accept persons when you reprove anyone for transgression;
- you will be weak and peaceable;
- you will tremble at the words you hear; (61)
- you will not be mindful of evil against your brother;
- you will not be doubtful of mind, whether a thing shall be or not;
- you will not take in vain the name of the Lord;
- you will love your neighbour more than your own soul;
- you will not slay the child by procuring abortion;
- you will not withdraw your hand from your son or daughter and you will teach your children from their infancies about the fear of the Lord;
- you will not covet what belongs to your neighbour and you will not be avaricious;
- you should not be haughty in the soul and you should be reckoned with the righteous and lowly;
- you should receive as good things the trials coming on you;
- you should not be of double mind or double tongue because this is a snare of death;
- you should be subject to the Lord or to other masters as the image of God, with modesty and fear;
- you should be pure in your soul, as far as possible;

- you should not be ready to stretch forth your hands to take while you contract them to give;
- you should love, like the apple of your eye, every one that speaks to you the word of the Lord;
- you should remember the day of judgment, night and day;
- you should seek every day the faces of the Saints, either by word examining them or by going to exhort them and by meditating how to have a soul by the word or by your hands;
- you should labour for the redemption of your sins;
- you should not hesitate to give nor murmur when you do give. Give to everyone that asks you and you shall know who is the good recompense of the reward. You will preserve what you have received in charge, neither adding to it nor taking from it.
- Do not be ready to stretch forth thy hands to take whilst you contract them when you give;
- you should love like the apple of your eye everyone who speaks to you the word of the Lord;
- you shall remember the day of judgement, night and day;
- you should seek out every day the figures of all the persons of the saints, either by word, examining them or by going to exhort them and by meditating how to save a soul by the word or by your hands;
- you should labour for the redemption of your sins;
- lastly, you should hate the wicked and judge righteously;
- you should not take a schism but you should pacify those who contend by bringing them together;
- you should confess your sins;
- you should not go to prayer with an evil conscience.
This is the way of light.

Chapter 20: The way of darkness

The way of darkness is crooked and full of cursing because it is the way of eternal death with punishment, in the way which there are things which destroy the soul: idolatry, overconfidence, arrogance of power, hypocrisy, double - heartedness, adultery, murder, rapine, haughtiness, transgression deceit, malice, self - sufficiency, poisoning, magic, avarice, want of the fear of God. Likewise, are those who persecute the good, those who hate truth, those who love falsehood, those who do not know the reward of righteousness, those who cleave not to do what is good, those who attend not with just judgement to the widow and the orphan, those who do not watch the fear of God and incline to wickedness, from whom weakness and patience are far off; persons who love vanity, follow after reward, have no pity for the needy, do not activate in the aid of the human who is overcome with toil, who are prone to evil - speaking, who know not God, who are murderers of children, destroyers of the workmanship of God, those who turn away the person in want, who oppress the afflicted, who are the advocates of the rich, who are unjust judges of the poor and who are transgressors in every respect.

Chapter 21: Conclusion

The readers of the learned judgements of the Lord should live accordingly. Those who respect the learned judgments of the Lord shall be glorified in the kingdom of God; who elects other things should be destroyed with his works. On the last account there will be a resurrection and on the first account there will be a retribution. The author asks the superiors to accept among themselves those to whom they should show kindness and not to forsake them because the day is near when the evil will perish. The Lord is near as well as His reward. The author implores the people to be good lawgivers one for the others, to continue to be faithful counsellors for each other and to put away any hypocrisy. The author wishes his audience that God, who rules over the spirit, give his audience with patience the wisdom, intelligence, understanding and knowledge of His judgements. The people should be taught by God, inquiring diligently what the Lord asks from them. The people should execute diligently the requirements of God, so that they may be safe in the day of judgement. If the people remember what is good, they should be mindful of God and meditate on these things so that desire and watchfulness may result in some good. The author asks the readers from the public to entreat that as a favour. While the members of the public are in this fair vessel, they should not fail in any of those things and should unceasingly seek after them and fulfil every commandment because these things are worthy. The author wishes that the Lord of glory and all the grace should be with the spirit of the readers.

Notes

1. *The Epistle of Barnabas* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 97 ff.
2. Isaiah 1:11 - 14
3. Jeremiah 7:22; Zecharia 8:17
4. Psalms 51:19
5. Isaiah 58:4 - 5
6. Isaiah 58:6 - 10
7. In the original, here are mentioned several approximate citations from the non - canonical writings of Enoch and from the Book of Daniel. [AT]
8. Exodus 32:7; Exodus 32:7; Deuteronomy 9:12
9. Isaiah 5:21
10. Matthew 22:14
11. Isaiah 53: 5,7
12. Proverbs 1:17
13. Genesis 1:26
14. Matthew 9:13; Mark 2:17; Luke 5:32
15. See: Genesis 1:26; Isaiah 50: 6 - 10; Ezekiel 11:19; Ezekiel 36:26. See also J. Christopher Edwards, *The Gospel According to the Epistle of Barnabas. Jesus Traditions in an Early Christian Polemic*, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2019) [AT]
16. Cf.: Acts 14:22
17. Barnabas formulates the questions and the answers although the whole subject is not mentioned in the Scripture. [AT]

18. Psalms 18:44
19. Isaiah 33:13
20. Jeremiah 4:4
21. Jeremiah 7:2
22. Psalms 34:11 - 13
23. Jeremiah 4: 3 - 4. Cf.: Deuteronomy 10:16
24. Leviticus 11; Deuteronomy 14
25. Deuteronomy 4:1
26. Psalms 1:1
27. Jeremiah 2:12 - 13
28. Isaiah 45:2 - 3
29. Isaiah 33:15 - 18
30. Psalms 1:3 - 6
31. See: Zephania 3:19; Ezekiel 47:12
32. Cf. Habakkuk 2:11
33. Isaiah 65:2
34. Genesis 3:13 - 21 [AT]
35. See Numbers 21:6 - 9; John 3:14 - 18
36. Deuteronomy 27:15
37. Number 21:8 - 9
38. Colossians 1:16
39. The end of chapter 12 is founded on the ancient assumption about the identity between Jesus Christ and Joshua Ben Nun, which is the sixth book of the Old Testament. The early Fathers of the Church considered that there existed an identity between Joshua Ben Nun and Jesus Christ but this opinion has been abolished later. See: Aidan Nichols, *Lovely, Like Jerusalem. The Fulfilment of the Old Testament in Christ and the Church*, (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007) [AT]
40. Genesis 25:21
41. Genesis 25:23
42. Genesis 48:18 - 19
43. Genesis 15:6; Genesis 17:5; Romans 4:3; Genesis 16:3
44. Exodus 25:18
45. Exodus 31:18
46. Exodus 32:7; Deuteronomy 9:12
47. Exodus 32:19 [AT]
48. Isaiah 42:6 - 7
49. Isaiah 49:6
50. Isaiah 61:1 - 3
51. Exodus 20:8; Deuteronomy 5:12
52. Jeremiah 17: 24 - 25
53. Genesis 2:2
54. Psalms 90.4; 2 Peter 3:8
55. Isaiah 1:13 - 14
56. Isaiah 40:12
57. Isaiah 66:1
58. Isaiah 5, Jeremiah 25
59. Daniel 9:24 - 27
60. Cf. 2 Corinthians 12:7
61. Isaiah 66:2

Ignatius of Antioch

Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians (1)

Preface

Dedication

Ignatius, also called *Theophanus*, writes to the Church of Ephesus, deservedly the most happy, being blessed in greatness and fullness in God the Father, predestined before ages to exist for ever, for an enduring and unchangeable glory, being united and elected through the true passion by the will of God the Father and our Lord Jesus Christ, our Saviour. Abundant happiness through Jesus Christ and His undefiled grace.

Chapter 1: Praise of the Ephesians

Ignatius came to know the greatly desired name of the Ephesians with God. They acquired this name by the habit of righteousness, according to the faith and love in Jesus Christ the Saviour. Being the followers of the love of God towards man and stirring up themselves by the blood of Christ, the Ephesians have perfectly accomplished the work assigned to them. Hearing that Ignatius came bound from Syria for the sake of Christ, trusting through their hopes to fight the beasts of Rome, the whole multitude of the Ephesians received Ignatius in the name of God through their bishop Onesimus, a person unspeakably beloved. Ignatius prays by Jesus Christ that the Ephesians will love bishop Onesimus and seek to be like him. Blessed be God who granted the excellent Ephesians such an excellent bishop.

Chapter 2: Congratulations and entreaties

Ignatius prays that Burrhus, the deacon of the Ephesians, should continue blameless for the honour of the Church od Ephesus. Ignatius admits that, by means of Crocus, Onesimus, Burrhus, Euplos and Fronto, he loved all the Ephesians, wishing to be always worthy of it. Therefore, it is befitting that the Ephesians should glorify Jesus Christ in every way, as Jesus Christ has glorified them by unanimous obedience: "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may be perfectly united in mind and thought." (2) Being subject to the bishop and presbyters, the Ephesians may be sanctified in all respects.

Chapter 3: Exhortations of unity

Ignatius speaks to the Ephesians as his fellow - servants and not as a great person. For Ignatius it was useful to be admonished by the Ephesians in faith, exhortation, patience and long suffering. Love does not allow Ignatius to be silent about the Ephesians. Thus, Ignatius has taken (3) upon himself the task to encourage the Ephesians to run at first together, in accordance to the will of God.

Even Jesus does all things according to the will of the Father: "The one who sent me is with me; he has not left me alone for I always do what pleases him." (4) Therefore, we also have the duty to live according to the will of God in Christ and imitate Him as Paul did. Paul said: "I praise you for remembering me in everything and for holding to the teachings, just as I passed them on to you." (5) As Jesus Christ, our inseparable life, is the manifested will of the Father, so also the bishops are settled everywhere to the utmost bounds of earth by the will of Jesus Christ.

Chapter 4: The same continued

Therefore, the Ephesians should also live according to the will of the bishop who rules according to the will of God. The Ephesians need to do that themselves, being instructed by the Spirit. The renowned presbytery of the Ephesians is worthy of God and is fitted to the bishop as the strings are fitted to the harp. Thus, being joined together in concord and harmonious love, of which Jesus Christ is the captain and guardian, man by man can become one choir. Agreeing together in concord and obtaining a perfect unity with God, the Ephesians are in a harmonious feeling with God the Father and His beloved Son Jesus Christ who says: "11. I will remain in in the world no longer, but they are still in the world and I am coming to you. Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name - the name you gave me - so that they may be one as we are one. 12. While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction, so that the Scripture would be fulfilled." (6) Therefore, it is profitable that the people, joined together with God in an unblameable unity, should be the followers of the example of Christ, forming a communion with Him.

Chapter 5: The praise of unity

Ignatius tells the Ephesians that he enjoyed the spiritual relation that they have with their bishop. Thus, Ignatius agrees that the Ephesians are happy to depend on a person like their bishop, as the Church depends the Lord Jesus and as the Lord Jesus depends on God and His Father. Thus, all things may agree in unity. No one should deceive himself: if anyone may not be within the altar, he is deprived of the bread of God. Jesus said: "Again, I tell you that if two of you on earth agree about anything you ask for, it will be done for you by my Father in heaven." (7) If two persons have such power when Christ stand in the midst of them, how much power will have the prayer of the bishop and the whole Church, ascending up in harmony to God prevail for the granting of all their petitions in Christ. Therefore, the one who separates himself from such and does not participate in the society where sacrifices are offered ("the assembly of sacrifices") and in the "Church of the first - born whose names are written in heaven" is a ferocious wolf in the clothing of a sheep. (8) Ignatius calls the audience to be subject to the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons because who is subjected to them is obedient to Christ, who appointed them. The disobedient or unbeliever (9) in Jesus Christ will not see life but the wrath of God abide on him. Who does not yield to obedience to his superiors is self - confident, quarrelsome and proud. God resists the proud but gives grace to the humble. (10)

Chapter 6: The bishop is to be respected like is respected Jesus Christ Himself

Ignatius claims that the more the bishop is seen keeping silence, the more the people should respect him. We ought to accept every one sent by the Master of the house as we would accept the Master of the house. Therefore, it is clear that we should look at the bishop standing before the Lord as we look at the Lord Himself. (11) All the Ephesians live according to the truth and no sect has any dwelling place among them. The Ephesians do not listen to anyone except Jesus Christ, the true shepherd and teacher.
"4. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - 5.one Lord, one faith, one baptism 6. One God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all." (12) Such were the teachings of Paul the Christ - bearer and Timithy, the most faithful.

Chapter 7: Beware of false teachers

Some most worthless persons use to carry out the name of Jesus Christ in wicked guile, while they practise things unworthy of God. Their opinions are in contradiction to the doctrine of Christ and lead to their own destruction as well as to the destruction of those who believe them. The false teachers should be avoided loke wild beasts. "…the righteous stand firm forever." (13) "the integrity of the upright guides them but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity." (14) "… they are all mute dogs, they cannot bark; they lie around and dream, they love to sleep." (15) The people must be on their guard against them since they work in an incurable disease. Our physician is the only true God, the unbegotten and unapproachable, the Lord of all, the Father and Begotten of the only - begotten Son. Our physician is also the Lord our God, Jesus the Christ, the only begotten Son and Word from before the ages who afterwards became also human of Mary the Virgin. "The Word was made flesh." (16) Being incorporeal, He was in the body; being impassible, He was in a passible body; being immortal, He was in a mortal body; being life, He became subject to corruption, that He might free our souls from death and corruption and heal them and might restore them to health, when they were diseased with ungodliness and wicked lusts.

Chapter 8: Renewed praise of the Ephesians

The Ephesians should not let anyone deceive them. Indeed, the Ephesians are not deceived because they are entirely devoted to God. When there is no evil desire in the human being, which might defile and torment, the human beings live according to the will of God and they are servants of Christ. The Ephesians should cast out what defiles them. The Church of the Ephesians is famous and celebrated throughout the world. The who are carnal cannot do spiritual things as the spirituals cannot do carnal things. Even faith cannot do the works of faith. Being full of the Holy Spirit, the Ephesians do nothing according to the flesh but do everything according to the Spirit. The Ephesians are complete in Jesus Christ: "… we have put our hope in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men and especially of those who believe." (17)

Chapter 9

Ignatius heard that some false teachers penetrated among the Ephesians, holding the wicked doctrine of the strange and evil spirit. The Ephesians did not allow them to sow their tares and refused to accept the error they proclaimed, being persuaded that the spirit deceiving the people did not speak the things of Christ but its own things because it is a lying spirit. The Holy Spirit does not speak His own things but those of Christ, not from Itself but the Lord who made known to us the things He received from the Father: "These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me." (18) He also says of the Holy Spirit: "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears and he will tell you what is yet to come." (19) He says of Himself to the Father: "4. I have brought you glory on earth by completing the work you have made me to do. 5. And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began. 6. I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word." (20) He says of the Holy Ghost: "He will bring glory to me by taking from what is mine and making it known to you." (21) But the spirit of deceit preaches itself and speaks his own things because he seeks to please himself. The spirit of deceit preaches itself and most arrogant. This spirit of deceit is lying, fraudulent, soothing, flattering, treacherous, rhapsodical, trifling, inharmonious, verbose, sordid and timorous. Jesus Christ will deliver the Ephesians from the power of the spirit of deceit. Jesus Christ founded the Ephesians upon the rock as chosen stones, well fitted to the divine edifice of the Father. "Blessed are they whose ways are blameless, who walk according to the law of the Lord." (22) Now the way is unerring, as Jesus Christ says: "I am the way and the truth and the life. Not one comes to the Father except through me." (23) Ignatius blesses the Ephesians for being "a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people." (24), " Saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus." (25) The author rejoices on the Ephesians that they do not give heed to vanity and love nothing according to flesh but according to God.

Chapter 10: Exhortations to prayer, humility

The Ephesians pray ceaselessly on behalf of other men, for there is the hope of repentance and that they may attain to God. "Say to them: "This is what the Lord says: 'When men fall down, do they not get up?
When a man turns away, does he not return?'" (26) Therefore, allow these people to be instructed by you and you be their ministers of God and the mouth of Christ, as the Lord said: "Therefore this is what the Lord says: "If you repent, I will restore you that you may serve me; if you utter worthy, not worthless, words you will be my spokesman. Let this people turn to you but you must not turn to them."" (27) You should be humble in response to their wrath; oppose to their blasphemies your earnest prayers; steadfast in your faith as they go astray. You should conquer their harsh temper by gentleness and their passion by their meekness. "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth." (28) "Moses was a very humble man, more humble than anyone else on the face of the earth." (29) David was exceedingly meek. (30) Therefore, Paul exhorts as follows: "24. And the Lord’s servant must not quarrel; instead, he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. 25. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth." (31) You should not seek to avenge yourselves on those that injure you, as the Scripture says: "4. If I

have done evil to him who is at peace with me or without cause have robbed my foe. 5. Then let my enemy pursue overtake me." (32) Let us make them brethren by our kindness and the name of the Lord may be glorified. We should act like the Lord: "When they hurled their insults at him, he did not retaliate; when he suffered, he made no threats. Instead, he entrusted himself to him who judges justly." (33) He prayed for His enemies: "Jesus said: "Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing."" (34) If anyone displays more patience as he is injured, he should be blessed. If anyone is defrauded or despised for the name of the Lord, he is truly the servant of Christ. The members of the crowd should take care that no plant of devil is found among them because such a plant is bitter and salt. "The end of all things is near. Therefore, be clear minded and self - controlled so that you can pray." (35)

Chapter 11: An exhortation to fear God

The end of times comes on us. Therefore, let us be a reverent spirit and fear the long - suffering of God, unless we despise the riches of His goodness and forbearance. (36) Let us either fear the wrath to come or let us love the present joy in the present life. Let our true joy to be found only in Jesus Christ that He may truly live. At any time do not desire anything more, not even to breathe apart from Him. Foe He is my hope; He is my boast; He is my never - failing richness. Ignatius claims that, on account of Jesus, he bears these bonds from Syria to Rome, these spiritual jewels in which he may become perfect by means of the prayers of the crowd, become a partaker of the sufferings of Christ and have fellowship with Him on His death, His resurrection from the dead and His eternal life. (37) The author wishes to himself to be in the mass of Christians of Ephesus who always had intercourse with the Apostles, by the power of Jesus Christ with Paul, John and Timothy, the most faithful.

Chapter 12: Praise of the Ephesians

Ignatius declares that he knows his identity as well as his addressee. He declares modestly his insignificance and has a lot in common with those exposed to danger and condemnation. On the other hand, the Ephesians have been subject to mercy and are established in Jesus Christ. Ignatius claims that he is delivered over the death but the least of all those that have been cut off for the sake of Christ "from the blood of the righteous Abel to the blood of Zechariah son of Berekiah...". (38) The Ephesians are initiated in the mysteries of the Gospel with Paul the martyr, inasmuch as he was " a chosen instrument". (39) Ignatius says that he may be found at the feet of St. Paul as well as at the feet of the rest of the Saints, when he will attain to Jesus Christ, who is always mindful of the Ephesians in His prayers.

Chapter 13: Exhortation to meet together frequently for the worship of God

Ignatius calls the Ephesians to gather often to thank God and show forth His praise. When the Christians gather frequently in the same place, the powers of the Satan are destroyed and all the flaming arrows of the evil can be extinguished (40). The concord and faith prove the destruction of Satan and the torments of those who help. "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood but against the rulers,

against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms." (41)

Chapter 14: Exhortation to faith and love

None of the devil's devices shall be hidden if, like Paul, the believers perfectly possess the faith and love towards Jesus Christ (42), which are the beginning and the end of life. The beginning of life is faith and the end of love is love. These two inseparable elements are inseparably connected together and make perfect the man of God. All the other elements required for the holy life follow faith and love. The person who professes faith ought not to sin. The person dominated by love ought not to hate his brother. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind." (43) Those who claim to belong to Jesus Christ are known not only by what they say but also by what they do. "… a tree recognized by its fruit." (44)

Chapter 15: Exhortation to confess Christ by silence as well as by speech

For a human being, it is better to be silent and Christian than to talk and not be a Christian. "The kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power." (45) "…it is with your heart that you believe and are justified and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." (46) "Anyone who breaks one of the least of these commands and teaches others to do the same will be called least in the kingdom of heaven, but whoever practices and teaches these commands will be called great in the kingdom of heaven." (47) Our Lord Jesus Christ, the son of the living God, first did and then taught. His praise is in the Gospel in all the Churches. (48) Nothing is hidden from the Lord and our very secrets are near to Him. Therefore, let us do all things as those who have dwelling in us, that we may be His temples (49) and He may be in us as God. Let Christ speak in us, even as He did in Paul. Let the Holy Spirit teach us the things of Christ, in like manner as He did.

Chapter 16: The fate of false teachers

Those who corrupt families shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. (50) If those who corrupt mere human families are condemned to death. Much more will suffer everlasting punishment those who endeavour to corrupt the Church of Christ, for which the Lord Jesus, the unique begotten Son of God, endured the Cross and submitted to death! Whosoever sets at nought the doctrine of Jesus Christ, shall go into hell. Similarly, the person who received from God the power to distinguish and still follows an unskilful shepherd and receives a false opinion for the truth, shall be punished. (51) Likewise, Ignatius asks what has truth in common with falsehood or unrighteousness or what has in common the true doctrine with the false doctrine?

Chapter 17: Beware of false doctrines

The Lord Jesus accepted the ointment to be poured upon His head (52) so that His Church might breathe forth immortality. (53) No one should be anointed with the bad odour of the prince of this world; he should not be allowed to lead the people captive from the live which is set before you. We are gifted with reason but

why do we not act wisely? Why do we fall headlong into ignorance when we have received from Christ and grafted in us the capability of judging concerning God? Why do we foolishly perish through a careless neglect of acknowledging the gift we have received?

Chapter 18: The glory of the Cross

For those who do not believe, the Cross is a stumbling block. (54) For those who believe, the Cross is salvation and eternal life. "Were is the wise man? Where is the scholar? Where is philosopher of the age? Has not God made foolish the wisdom of the world?" (55) The Son of God was begotten before the ages and established all things according to the will of the Father. The Holy Ghost conceived Jesus Christ in the womb of Mary. (56) He was born and baptized by John that he might ratify the institution committed to that prophet.

Chapter 19: Three celebrated mysteries

The virginity of Mary, her offspring and the death of the Lord were famous mysteries which were wrought in silence by God but have been revealed to the generations. A star shone forth in heaven above all that were before: its light was inexpressible while its novelty struck humans with astonishment. All the other stars, with the sun and the moon, forms a chorus for this new star which was exceeding them in its brightness. Agitation was felt once this new spectacle proceeded. Hence, worldly wisdom became folly; conjuration was seen to be merely trifling and magic became utterly ridiculous. Every law of wickedness Vanishes, the darkness of ignorance was dispersed and the tyrannical authority was dispersed, God being manifested as man and man displaying power as God. Thus, God is absolutely true and man is a pragmatic solution. The beginning was perfected by God. Henceforth, all things were in a state of tumult because He meditated the abolition of death.

Chapter 20: Promise of another letter; exhortations to steadfastness and unity

(Shorter version) Ignatius tells the Ephesians that he will write them a little second book, if Jesus Christ will allow him. In the future book, Ignatius intends to display the nature of the dispensation with which he began to treat the new man, Jesus Christ, in His love, in His suffering and in His resurrection. Ignatius promises to do that especially if the Lord will make known to him that the Ephesians came in common man by man through grace, united in one faith and in Jesus Christ, who was of the seed of David according to the flesh, being both the son of man and the Son of God. Thus, the people must obey the bishop and the presbyters with an undivided mind, breaking one and the same bread, the medicine of immortality, the antidote which prevents death and causes the human eternal life in Jesus Christ. This is also a cleansing remedy which is driving evil away and allows us to live in God through Jesus Christ.

Chapter 21: Conclusion

Ignatius wishes his soul to belong to the Ephesians and those who they sent to Smyrna in the honour of God. Once writing to the Ephesians, Ignatius thanks the Lord and the beloved Polycarp. He asks the Ephesians to remember him as Jesus remembered them. The Ephesians should pray for the Church in Syria, whence he is led bound to Rome, being the last of the faithful from there, who was yet considered worthy to carry these chains in the honour of God. Ignatius tells farewell in God the Father, in the Lord Jesus Christ, the common hope and in the Holy Ghost.

Notes

1.Epistle of Ignatius to the Ephesians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 145 ff.
2. 1 Corinthians 1:10
3. Philemon 8, 9
4. John 8:29
5. 1 Corinthians 11:1
6. John 17: 11 - 12
7. Matthew 18:19
8. Matthew 7:15
9. John 3:36
10. Proverbs 3:34; James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5
11. Proverbs 22:29
12. Ephesians 4:4 - 6
13. Proverbs 10:25
14. Proverbs 11:3
15. Isaiah 56:10
16. John 2:14
17. 1 Timothy 4:10
18. John 14:24
19. John 16:13
20. John 17:4 - 6
21. John 16:14
22. Psalms 119:1
23. John 14:6
24. 1 Peter 2:9
25. Ephesians 1:1
26. Jeremiah 8:4
27. Jeremiah 15:19
28. Matthew 5:5

29. Numbers 12:3
30. Psalms 131:2
31. 2 Timothy 2:24 - 25
32. Psalms 7:4 - 5
33. 1 Peter 2:23
34. Luke 23:34
35. 1 Peter 4:7
36. Romans 2:4
37. Philippians 3:10
38. Matthew 23:35
39. Acts 9:15
40. Ephesians 6:16
41. Ephesians 6:12
42. 1 Timothy 1:14
43. Luke 10:27
44. Matthew 12:33
45. 1 Corinthians 4:20
46. Romans 10:10
47. Matthew 5:19
48. 2 Corinthians 8:18
49. 1 Corinthians 6:19
50. 1 Corinthians 6:9 - 10
51. 2 Corinthians 6:14 - 16
52. Cf. John 12:7
53. Song of Songs 1:3 - 4
54. Cf. 1 Corinthians 1:18
55. 1 Corinthians 1:20
56. Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:23

Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians (*)

Chapter 1: Reason for writing the Epistle

Ignatius greatly rejoiced to hear about the love of the Magnesians for God and decided to commune with them in the faith of Jesus Christ. Since Ignatius was considered worthy of a divine and desirable name (i.e. *Theophorus*), he asks the churches in which he prays for a union of the flesh and spirit of Jesus Christ "who us the Saviour of all men but especially of them that believe." (1), by whose blood they were redeemed by whom they have known God or rather they gave been known by God. (2) In their enduring, the Magnesians will escape all the assaults of this world since "God is faithful; He will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear." (3)

Chapter 2: Ignatius rejoices in the messengers of the Magnesians

Ignatius had the privilege of seeing the Magnesians through Damas the worthiest bishop, through the worthy presbyters Basus and Apollonius and through the fellow servant deacon Sotio.

Chapter 3: The young bishop should be honoured

The believers must not despise the age of the bishop but yield him all reverence, according to the will of God the Father. Even holy presbyters do not consider the youth of their presbyters but the knowledge of God. We must consider the spirit of man regardless of his age. (4) Daniel the wise became possessed by the divine Spirit at the age of twelve and convicted the elders for being false accusers and lusting after the beauty of another man’s wife. (5) When he was a little child, Samuel reproved the ninety years old Eli that he honours his sins rather that God. (6) God had told Jeremiah: ""7. Do not say "I am only a child." You must

go to everyone I send you to say whatever I command you. Do not be afraid of them for I am with you and I rescue you."" (7) Solomon and Josiah were also examples. Solomon was crowned at the age of 12 and gave the terrible and difficult judgement in the case of two women concerning their children. (8) Josiah came to the throne when he was eight years old (9) Josiah cast down the altars and temples of the idols and burned down the groves because they were dedicated to demons and not to God. I view of all that, youth is not to be despised when it is devoted to God but the wicked mind of an old man is to be despised. "Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (10) Therefore, it is desirable that Christian members of the public should be obedient to their bishop and should not pave any contradiction with him because it is fearful to contradict such a person. Moses said: "Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the Lord." (11) Among those who rose against their superiors, no one remained unpunished. (12) The conclusion is that people should respect their superiors.

Chapter 4: Some wicked act independently of the bishop

It is fitting not only to be called Christian but to be Christian in reality. A man becomes blessed by really being Christian and not only by being called Christian. The true and first Bishop, the only high priest by nature, declares: "Why do you call me Lord, Lord and do not do what I say?" (13) The author believes that such persons seem not to be possessed by a good conscience but are simply dissemblers and hypocrites.

Chapter 5: Death is the fate of all such

We see that all things have an end. Life is set before us upon our observance of the precepts of God. Death is a result of disobedience. According to his own choice, everyone shall go his own place. Let us flee from death and make the choice of life. Two characters are found among men: one true coin and one spurious coin. The truly devout man is the right kind of coin, stamped by God Himself. The ungodly man is the false coin, unlawful, spurious, counterfeit, wrought noy by God but by the devil. The author’s aim is not to say that there are two different natures but that there is one humanity, belonging sometimes to God and sometimes to the devil. If someone is truly religious, he is a of God; if someone is irreligious, he is a man of devil, made as such not by his own choice but by nature. The unbelieving man bear the image of the prince of wickedness. The believing man possesses the image of the Prince, God the Father and Jesus Christ. If we are not ready to die for the truth in His passion, His life is not with us.

Chapter 6: Preserve harmony

The author considers the whole crowd in faith and love. The author exhorts the public to do all things with divine harmony, while the bishop presides in the place of God and the presbyters are in the place of the assembly of the apostles, along with the deacons, entrusted with the ministry of Jesus Christ. Being begotten by the Father before the ages, Jesus Christ was God the Word, the only begotten Son and remains as such for eternity. Daniel the prophet says: "In the time of those kings, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed, nor

will it be left to another people." (14) Therefore, let us love one another in harmony and let no one look upon his neighbour according to the flesh but according to Jesus Christ. Let nothing exist among the multitude of Christians which may divide them; the believers should be united with one bishop, by whom they should be subject to God in Christ.

Chapter 7: Do nothing without the bishop and presbyters

As the Lord does nothing without the Father, being united with Him, the Christians, i.e. the multitude, the presbyters, the deacon or the layman should do anything without the bishop. The Christian should not let appear anything commendable which is destitute of the approval of the bishop because such a thing is sinful and opposed to the will of God. The Christians should come together for prayer in the same place. The most excellent situation is that the Christians should have one common supplication, one mind, one hope with faith unblameable in Jesus Christ. All the Christians should come together as one man into the Temple of God, as unto one altar, to one Jesus Christ, the High Priest of the unbegotten God.

Chapter 8: Caution against false doctrines

The Christian believer should not be deceived with strange doctrines. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the command of God our Saviour, told Timothey: "3. As I urged you when I went into Macedonia, stay there in Ephesus so that you may command certain man not to teach false doctrines any longer 4. nor to devote themselves to myths and endless genealogies. These promote controversies rather than God’s work, which is by faith. 5. The goal of this command is love, which comes from a pure heart and good conscience and a sincere faith." (15) If we still live according to the Jewish law and the circumcision of the flesh, we deny that we have received grace because the most divine prophets lived according to Jesus Christ. On this account they were persecuted, being inspired by grace to fully convince the unbelieving that there is one God, the Almighty, who has manifested Himself by Jesus Christ His Son, who is His word not spoken but essential. For He is not the voice of an articulate utterance but a substance begotten by divine power, who has in all things pleased Him that sent Him.

Chapter 9: Let us live with Him

Therefore, if those who were conversant with the ancient Scripture came to newness of hope, expecting the coming of Christ, how shall we be able to live without Him? Jesus teaches us: "If you believed Moses, you should believe me, for he wrote about me." (16) "56. Your father Abraham rejoiced at the thought of seeing my day; he saw it and was glad. … 58. ""I tell you the truth", Jesus answered, before Abraham was born, I am."" (17) The prophets were the servants of Jesus, foresaw Him by the Spirit and waited for Him as their teacher and expected Him as their Lord and Saviour, saying: "Say to those with fearful hearts: "Be strong, do not fear; your God will come, He will come with vengeance, with divine retribution, He will come to save you."" (18) Therefore, let us no longer keep the Sabbath after the Jewish manner and rejoice in days of idleness: "For even when we were with you, we gave you this rule: "if a man will not work, he shall not

eat."" (19) The Holy Spirit says: "By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food until you return to the ground, since from the it you were taken; for dust you are and to dust you will return."" (20) The Christians should let everyone keep the Sabbath, following a spiritual manner, rejoicing in meditation on the law not in relaxation of the body, admiring the workmanship of God and eating things prepared, not using lukewarm drinks and walking within a prescribed space, nor finding delight in senseless dancing and plaudits. After the Sabbath observance, every friend of Christ should keep the Lord's day as a festival, the resurrection day, the queen and chief of all days of the week. On this day, our life both sprang up again and the victory over death was obtained in Christ. The children of perdition, the enemies of the Saviour deny this fact. (21) They are merchandising Christ, corrupting His word, corrupting women insatiably swallowing wealth. We may be delivered from these by the mercy of God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
Shorter version: If those who were brought up in the ancient order of things reached a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath but living in observance of the Lord's day, on which also our life has sprung up again by Him and by His death, by which mystery we have obtained faith and therefore endure, we may be found disciples of Jesus Christ, our only Master. In these circumstances, how shall we be able to live apart from Him, whose disciples, the prophets themselves, did wait for Him as their Teacher? Therefore, He was rightly waited for, came and raised them from the dead. (22)

Chapter 10: Beware of Judaizing

We should be sensible to the kindness of God. If God would have rewarded us according to our works, we would have ceased to exist. "If You, o Lord, kept a record of sins, o Lord, who could stand". (23) Therefore, let us prove ourselves worthy of that name which we have received. Who is called by any other name is not of God because he has not received the prophecy which speaks about us: "The nations will see your righteousness and all kings your glory; you will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow." (24) "They will be called the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord." (25) This was first fulfilled in Syria, when Paul and Peter were laying the foundations of the Church. "The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch." (26) Therefore, the Christians should lay aside the evil, the old, the corrupt leaven (27) and they should be changed into a new leaven of grace. The believer should abide in Christ so that the stranger should not dominate. It is absurd to profess Jesus Christ and to convert to Judaism because Christianity did not embrace Judaism but Judaism embraced Christianity. Christ is one, every nation believes in Him and He is gathered unto God. Those that were of a stony heart became children of Abraham. (28) In his seed, all those have been blessed (29) and were ordained to eternal life in Christ. (30)
Shorter version: We should be sensible to the kindness of God. Humanity would have ceased to exist if God would have rewarded it according to its work. As we became His disciples, humans should learn to give according to the principles of Christianity. It is absurd to profess Jesus Christ and to convert to Judaism because Christianity did not embrace Judaism but Judaism embraced Christianity so that all believers should be gathered in God.

Chapter 11: I write these things to warn you

The author declares that he wrote the current epistle to the Magnesians without knowing that any of them is addicted to the error of converting to Judaism. The author desires to guard the Magnesians from falling upon the hooks of vain doctrine. He desired that the Magnesians attain a full assurance in Christ, who was begotten by the Father before the ages but was born afterwards of the Virgin Mary, without any intercourse with man. Jesus Christ lived a holy life, treated every kind of sickness and disease among the people and wrought signs and wonders for the benefit of humans and those who had fallen into the error of polytheism. Jesus Christ made known the one and only true God, His Father, underwent the passion, endured the cross at the hands od Christ - killing Jews under Pontius Pilate the governor and Herod the king. Jesus Christ died, rose again, ascended into the heavens to His Father who sent Him and sat down at His right hand. Jesus Christ shall come at the end of the world with the glory of His Father to judge the living and the dead and to render to every one according to his works. (31) He who knows these things with a full assurance and believes them, is happy; even as you are now the lovers of God and of Christ, in the full assurance of our life, from which no one of us ever be turned aside.

Chapter 12: You are superior to me

The author wishes to enjoy the Magnesians, who are free and have Jesus within themselves. The Magnesians cherish spiritual modesty. (32) Ignatius encourages the Magnesians to have a humble spirit so that they may be exalted. (33)

Chapter 13: Be established in faith and unity

The author encourages the Magnesians to study in order to be established in the doctrines of the Lord and the Apostles. The purpose is that anything the Magnesians (or the Christians) do, they may prosper in flesh and spirit, in faith and love, in the Son and the Father and in the Spirit, with the most admirable bishop, the well - compacted spiritual crown of the presbytery and the deacons, according to the will of God. The people should be subject to the bishop and one to the other, as Jesus is subjected to God the Father, so that there may be a union of the flesh and the spirit.

Chapter 14: Your prayers requested

Knowing that the Magnesians are full of good, the author has only briefly exhorted them in the love of Jesus Christ. The author asks the Magnesians to be mindful in their prayers because he needs their unite prayer in God and their love. The purpose is that, by the good order of the Magnesians, the Church in Syria may be deemed worthy of being edified in Christ.

Chapter 15: Salutations

The Ephesians from Smyrna, who are here for the glory of God, as are the Magnesians, salute the Magnesians, as also does Polycarp. The rest of the Churches also salute the Magnesians. The author wishes the Magnesians to fare well in harmony by the will of God, as they have obtained by the will of God, the inseparable Spirit in Jesus Christ.

Notes

* Epistle of Ignatius to the Magnesians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 171 ff
1. 1 Timothy 4:10
2. Cf. Galatians 4:9
3. 1 Corinthians 10:13
4. Job 32: 8 - 9
5. Daniel 13. This source is an apocryphal document. See: W. H. Daubney, *The Three Additions to Daniel*, (Cambridge: Dreighton, Bell & als., 1906) [AT]
6. 1 Samuel 3
7. Jeremiah 1:7
8. 1 Kings 3:16
9. 2 Kings 22, 23
10. 1 Timothy 4:12
11. Exodus 16:8
12. See: Numbers 16:1 - 2; Numbers 16:31; 2 Samuel 18:14; 2 Samuel 20:22; 2 Chronicles 26:19 - 21;
1 Samuel 13:11.
13. Luke 6:46
14. Daniel 2:44. Cf. Daniel 7:13 - 14
15. 1 Timothy 1:3 - 5
16. John 5:46
17. John 8:56, 58
18. Isaiah 35:4
19. 2 Thessalonians 3:10
20. Genesis 3:19
21. Philippians 3:18 - 19; 2 Timothy 3:4
22. Matthew 27:52
23. Psalms 130:3
24. Isaiah 62:2
25. Isaiah 62:12
26. Acts 11:26
27. 1 Corinthians 5:7
28. Genesis 15:6; Matthew 3:9; Isaiah 41:8; James 2:23

29. Genesis 28:14
30. Acts 13:48
31. 2 Timothy 4:1; Romans 2:6
32. Proverbs 18:17
33. Luke 14:11

Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians *

Dedication

Ignatius (called also *Theophorus*) to the holy Church in Tralles, beloved by God the Father and Jesus Christ, elect and worthy of God, possessing peace through the flesh and Spirit of Jesus Christ, who is our hope, in His passion by the Cross and death and in His resurrection, which is also salute in its fulness of blessing, in the apostolical character and wish for abundance of happiness.

Chapter 1: Acknowledgment of the excellence of the Trallians

Ignatius declares his knowledge about the Trallians who have an unblameable and sincere patience as a current and permanent characteristic. Polybius, the bishop of Tralles, had shown to Ignatius the unblameable and sincere state of mind when he came to Smyrna by the will of God the Father and Jesus Christ His Son and greatly sympathized in the joy of Ignatius. Consequently, Ignatius beheld the whole multitude of the Trallians according to God, he gloried to find that the Trallians were the followers of Jesus Christ the Saviour.

Chapter 2: Be subject to the bishop

The believers should be subject to the bishop as to the Lord: "Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep watch over you as men must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you." (1) Therefore, Ignatius believes that people live not after the manner of men but according to Jesus Christ, who died for us. By believing in His death, the people may be made, by baptism, partners of His resurrection. Therefore, it is necessary that the people should not do anything without the bishop. The people should also be subject to the presbytery as well as to the apostles of Jesus Christ, who is our hope and in whom we shall be found, if we live. It is also the duty of the believers to please the deacons, who are the ministers of the mysteries of Jesus Christ. The deacons are not ministers of the meat and drink

bur are servants of the Church of God. The deacons are bound to avoid all accusations as they would avoid a burning fire. The deacons should prove themselves as such.

Chapter 3: Honour the deacons

The deacons keep the place of Jesus and, like Jesus, should be granted all reverence. The bishop represents the Universal Father and the presbyters are the Sanhedrin of God as well the assembly of the apostles of Christ. Apart from these, there is no elect Church, no congregation od holy ones, no assembly of saints. Ignatius believes that the Church of Tralles holds the same opinion. Therefore, the deacons are bound to avoid all grounds of accusation against them as they would avoid a burning fire. They deacons should prove themselves. The author affirms his modesty and claims that he is not worthy of Christ.

Chapter 4: I have need of humility

Ignatius believes that he has great knowledge in God but restrains himself, lest he would perish through boastings. However, this is good to the glory of the Lord. (2) Ignatius believes it is necessary to be more fearful. He desires to suffer for his faith but does not know if he deserves it. The envy of the wicked is not visible to many but the author is at war with it. Therefore, Ignatius states that he needs meekness, by which the devil, the prince of this world, is brought to nought.

Chapter 5: I will not teach you profound doctrines

All things have an end: life is set before us upon the observance of the percept of God while death is the result of disobedience. Everyone should go to his own place according to the choice he makes. Therefore, let us flee from death and make the choice of life. Among humans are found two different characters: the one true coin and the spurious. The truly devout man is the right kind of coin, stamped by God Himself. The ungodly man, again, is the false coin, unlawful, spurious, counterfeit, wrought noy by God but by the devil. The author does not intend to say that there are two different human natures but that only one humanity exists, belonging sometimes to God and sometimes to the devil. A truly religious person is a person of God; the irreligious is a man of devil by his own choice. The unbelieving has the image of the prince of wickedness. The believing has the image of the Prince, God the Father and Jesus Christ, whose life is not in us if we not ready to die for the truth into His passion.

Chapter 6: Abstain from the poison of the heretics

The love of Christ implores the people to speak similarly and avoid divisions. The believers will be perfectly united in the same mind and the judgement, without internal divisions. (3) There are vain talkers (4), non - Christians and betrayers of, bearing about the name of Christ in deceit and corrupting the word of the Gospel. (5) They interweave the poison of their deceit with their persuasive talk. Thus, the one who drinks the mixture of aconite with sweet wine is deceived in his taste by the very great sweetness of the draught and may incautiously meet his death. One

of the ancients gave us the following advice: "Let no man be called good who mixes good with evil." (6) They speak about Christ not to preach Him but to reject Him. They speak of the law not for its eventual establishment but for their proclamation of elements contradicting it. They alienate Christ from the Father and the law from Christ. They calumniate His birth from the virgin; they are ashamed of His cross; they deny His passions and do not believe in His resurrection. They consider that God is unknown, they suppose Christ to be unbegotten and they deny the existence of the Spirit. They claim that the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit are the same entity and the creation is the work of God by some other strange power.

Chapter 7: The same continued

The audience is warned against such persons. This means that the lives of the Christians will be without offence to all humans. The Christians will enjoy the privilege of being perfectly united with God.
"Surely his salvation is near those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our land." (7) God says: ""This is the one I esteem: he who is humble, and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word."" (8) As the blessed apostles have disposed, the Christians should revere the bishops as the bishop reveres Christ Himself. Who is within the altar is pure and therefore he is obedient to the bishop and the presbyters. Who is without an altar is a person who does anything differently than the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons. Such a person is defiled in his conscience and is worth less than an infidel. Beyond all the others, the bishop possesses the whole power and authority, as far as a human being can do that; according to his ability, this human was created as an imitation of the Christ of God. The presbytery is a sacred assembly, the counsellors and assessors of the bishop. The deacons are only imitators of Jesus Christ, ministering to the bishop as Christ ministers to the Father. The deacons are fulfilling a pure and blameless ministry unto Him, as the holy Stephen did to the blessed James, Timothy and Linus did to Paul, as Anacletus and Clement did to Peter. Therefore, who will not yield obedience to the ecclesiastical hierarchy must be a person utterly without God, an impious man who despises Christ and depreciates the appointments of God.

Chapter 8: Be on your guard against the snares of the devil

The author writes the present chapter without actually knowing if vicious people exist among the Trallians. Ignatius hopes that God, "who did not spare His own Son but gave Him up for us all" (9), will not allow the existence of evil persons. Foreseeing the snares of the wicked, Ignatius admonishes the Trallians, furnishing them with the means of protection against the deadly disease of unruly men, by which the people will flee from the disease by the good - will of Christ our Lord. Clothing themselves with meekness, the virtuous should become imitations of the sufferings of Christ and His love (10), when He gave Himself a ransom for us (11) that He might cleanse by His blood from our old ungodliness, when humans were near to perish due to human depravity. Therefore, the believers should

cherish any grudge against each neighbour for the Lord says: "For if you forgive men when they sin against you, your heavenly Father will also forgive you." (12)

Chapter 9: Reference to the history of Christ

Ignatius calls the public not to listen when someone speaks differently about Jesus Christ, the Son of God who descended from David and was also of Mary, who was truly begotten of God and of the Virgin but not following the same manner. Christ truly assumed a body. (13) He lived on earth without sin. He says: "Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why do you not believe me?" (14) He did not actually eat and drink. He was crucified and died under Pontius Pilate. Christ was not merely in appearance crucified and died, in the sight of beings in heaven, on earth and under the earth. Those in heaven possess incorporeal natures; those on earth were the Jews and the Romans and such persons were present when Jesus was crucified; those under the earth were the multitude that arose along with the Lord. "The tombs broke open and the bodies of many of the holy people who had died were raised to life." (15) He descended into Hades alone but arose accompanied by a multitude. He divided the means of separation which existed from the beginning of the world and cast down its wall of partition. The Father raised Him in three days. After spending forty days with the apostles, He was received up to the Father and "sat down at the right hand of God...That time He waits for his enemies to be made His foot - stool." (16) Then on the day of the preparation, at the third hour, He received the sentence from Pilate, the Father permitting that to happen; at the sixth hour He was crucified; at the nineth hour He gave up the ghost and before sunset He was taken down from the cross and laid into a new tomb. During the Sabbath, He continued in the tomb in which Joseph of Arimathea had laid Him. At the dawning of the Lord’s day, He arose from the dead. (17) Thus, the day of the preparation comprises the passion; the Sabbath contains the burial; the Lord’s day contains the resurrection.

Chapter 10: The reality of Christ’s passion

If some unbelievers maintain that only apparently Jesus became human, that He did not truly took Himself a body, that He died only apparently and did not really suffer, Ignatius asks for what reason He is bounded now and longs to be exposed to the wild beasts. In such a case, Jesus died in vain. "I will pour on the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem a spirit of grace and supplication. They will look on me, the one they have pierced and they will mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieve bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son." (18) Therefore, these men are not less unbelievers than those who crucified Jesus. Ignatius does not place his hopes in someone who apparently died for him but in someone who really died for him. The false is quite abhorrent to the truth. Then, Mary truly conceived a body which had God inhabiting it. God the Word was truly born in the Virgin, having clothed Himself with a body of passions like our own. He who forms all men in the womb was Himself a body of the seed of the Virgin but without any intercourse of man. Like us, He was carried in the womb for the usual period of time, was really born like us, was nourished with milk and partook of common meat and drink, as humans do. He had lived among humans for thirty years and was baptised by John, not only in appearance. After He had preached the Gospel for three years and had done signs and wonders, He, who was Himself the

Judge, was judged by the falsely so - called Jews and by Pilate the governor. He was scourged, smitten on the cheek; He wore o crown of thorns and a purple robe He was truly crucified, not in appearance, not in imagination nor in deceit. He really died, was buried and rose from the dead even as He prayed in a certain place saying: "But you, O Lord, have mercy on me, raise me up that I may repay them." (19) The Father, who always hears Him (20), answered: "Rise up, O God, judge the earth for all the nations are your inheritance." (21) Therefore, the Father who raised Him up will also raise us up through Him, apart from whom no one will attain to true life. For says He: "25. I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies, 26. and whoever lives and believes in me will never die." (22) Therefore, you flee from these ungodly heresies for these are inventions of the devil, the serpent who was the author of evil and who, by means of the woman, deceived Adam, the father of our race.

Chapter 11: Avoid the deadly errors of the *Docetae* (instructors)

Therefore, the audience is encouraged to flee those evil offshoots (of Satan), which produce death bearing fruit. If anyone tastes these fruits, he instantly dies. The audience is requested to avoid the wicked offshoots of Satan, Simon his first - born son, Menander, Basilides as well as all the wicked mob of followers, the worshippers of a man declared accursed also by the prophet Jeremiah. The audience is encouraged to flee from the Nicolaitanes, who are lovers of pleasure and addicted to calumnious speeches and to avoid Theodotus and Cleobulus, who produce death - bearing fruit which causes instant and eternal death. These are not the plating of the Father but are an accursed brood. The Lord says: "Every plant that my heavenly Father has not planted will be pulled up by the roots." (23) If they had been branches of the Father, they would not have been "enemies of the cross of Christ." (24) but rathe they would have been enemies of those who have glorified the Lord of glory. (25) Now, by denying the cross and by being ashamed of the passion, they cover the transgression of the Jews, those fighters against God, murderers of the Lord. It would have been too little to style them merely as murderers of the prophets. Christ invites the crowd to share in His immortality, in His passion and resurrection, as they are members of His community.

Chapter 12: Continue in unity and love

Ignatius salutes the Trallians from Smyrna, together with all the churches of God, which are with him and have a refreshed him both in flesh and spirit. Ignatius encourages the Trallians to continue their inner harmony and in mutual prayer. The entire crowd and especially the presbyters have the duty to refresh the bishop, to honour the Father of Jesus Christ and of the apostles.

Chapter 13: Conclusion

Due to his modesty, Ignatius claims to be the last of the Church of Syria. He wished the Trallians to continue to be in Jesus Christ, as they continue to be the subject to the bishop, to the presbyters and to the deacons. All the people should love one another with an undivided heart. Ignatius salutes the Trallians and will attend God. The Father of Jesus Christ is faithful to fulfil the petitions of Ignatius and the Trallians.

Notes

* Epistle of Ignatius to the Trallians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 189 ff.
1. Hebrews 13:17
2. 1 Corinthians 1:31; Jeremy 9:24
3. 1 Corinthians 1:10
4. Titus 1:10
5. 2 Corinthians 2:17
6. *Constitutions of the Holy Apostles* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante - Nicene Fathers*, (Peabody. Mass.: Hendrickson Publishers, 1886, 2004), v. 7, p. 387 ff
7. Psalms 85:9
8. Isaiah 66:2
9. Romans 8:32
10. Ephesians 2:4
11. Cf. 1 Timothy 2:6
12. Matthew 6:14
13. John 1:4
14. John 8:46
15. Matthew 27:52
16. Hebrews 10:12 - 13
17. Matthew 12:40
18. Zechariah 12:10
19. Psalms 41:10
20. John 11:42
21. Psalms 82:8
22. John 11:25 - 26
23. Matthew 15:13
24. Philippians 3:18
25. 1 Corinthians 2:8

Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans*

Introduction

Ignatius (also *Theophorus*) writes to the Church which has obtained mercy through the Majesty of the Highest Father and Jesus Christ, His only - begotten Son. This Church is beloved and enlightened by the will of God who wants all things which are according to the love of Jesus Christ, our God, who presides in the region of the Romans, is worthy of God, of honour, of the highest happiness, of praise, of obtaining every desire, of being most holy and presides over love, who is named from Christ and from the Father. Ignatius dedicates his letter to those who are united, both un flesh and spirit, to each of His commandments, to those who are filled inseparably with the grace of God and are purified from every strange taint. Ignatius wishes the audience abundance of unblameable happiness in Jesus Christ, our God.

Chapter 1: As a prisoner, I hope to see you

Ignatius considers himself prisoner in Christ. Through prayer to God, Ignatius received the privilege of seeing the worthiest face of God. As a prisoner in Christ, Ignatius wishes to salute the crowd, if God would think that he is worthy of attaining the end. The beginning had been well ordered if Ignatius would obtain the grace to receive his lot without hindrance unto the end. Ignatius declares that he is afraid of the love of God, lest it will injure him. It is easy for God to accomplish all His desires. For the human it is difficult to attain God, if God does not spare, under the pretence of carnal affection.

Chapter 2: Do not save me from martyrdom

Ignatius tells his audience that he desires that they should please Gog, not men. Ignatius believes that hereafter he will never have the opportunity to attain God. Now, if the people of his audience would be silent, they will never be entitled to be honoured of a better work. If the audience will remain silent about Ignatius, he will be owned by God; if the crowd will show love of Ignatius' flesh, he would have to run again his race. Therefore, Ignatius asks his audience not to seek to confer him any further favour beyond his sacrifice to God, while the altar is still prepared. Being gathered in love, the crowd may sing praise to the Father, through Jesus Christ, that God deemed Ignatius, the bishop of Smyrna, worthy to be sent from

the East to the West and become a martyr on behalf of His own precious suffering, in order to pass from the world to God, in order to rise again unto Him.

Chapter 3: Pray rather that I may attain to martyrdom

Ignatius claims that the audience never envied any one and taught this to others. Now, he desired that this behaviour should be confirmed by the conduct of the crowd and imposed on others by the instructions of the Romans. On behalf of Ignatius, the Romans should request strength inwardly and outwardly so that Ignatius may not be merely called Christian but he will be truly found to be a Christian. Ignatius claims that he may be called Christian and deemed faithful when he will no longer be in this world. Nothing visible is eternal. "We fix our eyes not on what is seen but on what is unseen. For what is seen is temporary but what is unseen is eternal." (1) The Christian is not the result of persuasion but of power. When he is hated by the world, he is beloved of God. "If you belonged to this world, it would love you as its own. As it is, you do not belong to the world but I have chosen you out of the world. That is why the world hates you." (2)

Chapter 4: Allow me to fall a prey to the wild beasts

Ignatius writes to all the churches that he shall willingly die for God, unless the crowd will prevent him. Ignatius requests the audience not to display an unreasonable goodwill towards him. He asks the audience to suffer him to become food for the wild beasts. Ignatius believes that by the instrumentality of the beasts for this purpose, he will be granted to attain God. Ignatius considers himself the wheat of God, the ground for the teeth of the wild beasts and may be found the pure bread of God. He prefers the wild beasts to be enticed so that become his tomb and may leave nothing of his body. So, upon his own death, he will not be found troublesome to anyone. Then, he will be a true disciple of Jesus Christ, the world will not see his body. Ignatius asks the audience to implore God on his behalf and that, by means of his sacrifice to the wild beasts, it will be found that he is a sacrifice to God. Ignatius explains that, unlike Peter and Paul, he does not issue commandments to the crowd. Peter and Paul were apostles of Jesus Christ while Ignatius considers himself the very least of the believers. As the servants of God, they were free (of human infirmities) while Ignatius considers himself a servant even until the current moment. When he will suffer, Ignatius will be the freedman of Jesus Christ and will rise again emancipated in Him. As for the present moment, being bounded for Him, Ignatius learns not to desire anything worldly or vain.

Chapter 5: I desire to die

From Syria to Rome, by land and sea, night and day, Ignatius fights with the beasts. He is bound by ten leopards or actually a band of soldiers who, even when they receive benefits, show themselves all the worse. Yet, Ignatius is more instructed by their injuries. "My conscience is clear but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me." (3) Ignatius wishes to enjoy the wild beasts that are prepared foe him. He prays that the wild beasts will be eager to

rush upon him as he will entice to be devoured speedily, declaring that he will compel them to assail him. Ignatius declares that he knows what is beneficial for him. At this moment, Ignatius believes that he begins to be a disciple, wishing to attain Jesus Christ, having no desire for anything visible or invisible. For this unique purpose, Ignatius declares that the following items should be left: the fire and the cross; the crowds of the wild beasts; the breakings and separation of bones; the cutting off of the members; the breaking to pieces of the whole body; the very torment of the devil. The unique desire of Ignatius is to be left to attain Jesus Christ.

Chapter 6: By death I will attain true life

Ignatius claims that all the ends of the world and all the kingdoms of this earth and this period will not bring him any profit. He believes it is better for him to die for the sake of Jesus Christ than to reign over all the ends of the earth. Jesus said to his disciples: "What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul? Or what can a man give in exchange for his soul" (4) Ignatius claims that he seeks Jesus, who died for us and rose again for the sake of humanity. This is the gain designed for Ignatius who asks the crowd not to hinder from the living and do not wish to keep him in a state of death. While Ignatius desires to belong to God, the audience should not give him over to the world. Ignatius tells his audience to tolerate him so that he may obtain pure light; when he will go thither, he will become a man of God. Ignatius asks the permission to be an imitation of the passion of God.

Chapter 7: Reason for desiring to die

Ignatius claims that the prince of the world would gladly carry him away and corrupt his disposition towards God. Therefore, no one in Rome should help him; the people of Rome should be on the side of Ignatius, i.e. on the side of God. The crowd should not speak of Jesus and should promote this world to Him. Envy should not be allowed to have a place among the people. The audience should rather credit the subjects discussed by the author. Ignatius is alive when he writes about the current subject but he is eager to die for the sake of the crucified Christ. Ignatius believes that he does not have in his interior the fire that loves anything but within him there a living water which tells him inwardly "Come to the Father". The author recognizes that he has no delight in corruptible food nor in the pleasures of this life but desires the bread of God, the heavenly bread, the bread of life which is the flesh of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who became afterwards of the seed of David and Abraham. Ignatius desires the drink, namely His blood, which is incorruptible love and eternal life.

Chapter 8: Be favourable to me (Ignatius)

Ignatius declares that he no longer waits to live after the manner of men and his desire will be fulfilled with the consent of the audience: " I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." (5) Ignatius entreats the audience not to refuse him. The audience that he loves Jesus, who was delivered foe his sake. "How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?" (6)

God the Father and Jesus Christ shall reveal these things to the Romans so that they will know that Ignatius spoke the truth. The Romans should pray along with the Ignatius so that may attain his aim in the Holy Spirit. Ignatius states that he has written to the Romans not according to the flesh but according to the will of God. Ignatius declares that if he will suffer, it means that the Romans have loved him and if he is rejected, it means that the Romans have hated him.

Chapter 9: Pray for the Church in Syria

Ignatius urges his audience to remember in their prayers the Church in Syria, which now has the Lord for its shepherd. The Lord alone will oversee it as well as the love of the audience towards Him. However, Ignatius is ashamed to be considered one of them because he believes he is unworthy, the very last of them, being born out of time. However, Ignatius declares that he has obtained the mercy to be somebody, if he will attain to God. His spirit salutes the Romans as well as the love with which the churches have received him, in the name of Jesus Christ and not only as a mere passer - by. Even the churches which were not neat to Ignatius have brought him forward, city by city.

Chapter 10: Conclusion

Ignatius declares that he writes his letter from Smyrna, near the Ephesians, who are deservedly most happy. Ignatius believes that the audience is acquainted to those who, for the glory of God, went before him from Syria to Rome. They are all worthy of God and of the crowd.

Notes

* Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 207 ff
1.2 Corinthians 4:18
2. John 15:19
3. 1 Corinthians 4:4
4. Matthew 16:26
5. Galatians 2:20
6. Psalms 116:2

Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians*

Introduction

Ignatius (also *Theophorus*) to the Church of God the Father and of the Lord Jesus Christ at Philadelphia, which has obtained mercy through love, which is established in the harmony of God and rejoices unceasingly in the passion of our Lord Jesus and is filled with all mercy through resurrection. Ignatius salutes in the

blood of Jesus Christ, our eternal and enduring joy, especially to those who are in unity with the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons, appointed by the will of God the Father, through the Lord Jesus Christ. According to His own will, the family of Jesus Christ has established firmly His church upon a rock, by a spiritual building not made with hands, against which the winds and floods have beaten but were unable to overthrow it. May spiritual wickedness never be able to do so but be essentially weakened by the power of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Chapter 1: Praise of the bishop

After having examined the bishop of the Philadelphians, Ignatius declares that he knows the bishop was selected to undertake the ministry pertaining to the common welfare by himself (1) or out of vainglory. The bishop of the Philadelphians was elected by the love pf Jesus Christ and of God the Father, who raised Him from the dead. The gentleness of the bishop of the Philadelphians strikes the admiration of Ignatius. By His silence, Jesus Christ can accomplish more than those who talk extensively. The bishop of the Philadelphians is in harmony with the commandments and ordinances of the Lord, even as the strings are with the harp and is no less blameless than Zechariah the priest. (2) Therefore, the soul of Ignatius declares that the mind of the bishop of the Philadelphians is a happy one, knowing that the virtuous and perfect and that his stability and freedom from anger is, after all, the example of the infinite mildness of the living God.

Chapter 2: Maintain union with the bishop

Therefore, as children of light and truth, the Philadelphians should avoid to divide their unity. They should also avoid the wicked doctrine of the heretics, from whom a defiling influence has gone forth into all the earth. (3) But, where is the shepherd, the people follow him as sheep. There are many wolves clothed as sheep and, by means of a pernicious pleasure, these wolves captivate (4) those that are running towards God. These heretics will have no place in the unity of the Christians.

Chapter 3: Avoid schismatics

Ignatius urges the Philadelphians to avoid the evil plants of which Jesus Christ does not care. The wild beasts, the destroyer of humans, take care of these evil plants because they are not the planting of the Father but the seed of the wicked. Ignatius declares that his purpose is to armour in advance the Philadelphians as the children of God and not because he had found any division among them. The children of Christ are also the children of the bishop. Those who fall away from the bishop and to encircle the communion with the accursed, they will be cut off with them. These opponents are not Christ’s husbandry the seed of the enemy, from whom the Christians can be delivered by the prayers of the shepherd i.e. the bishop, the most faithful and gentle shepherd who presides the Philadelphians. Therefore, Ignatius exhorts the Philadelphians in the Lord to receive most tenderly those who repent and return to the unity of the church. By means of the kindness and forbearance of the Philadelphians, these sinners may recover (5) themselves from the snare of the devil; by becoming worthy of Jesus Christ, they may obtain eternal salvation in the kingdom of Christ. Ignatius calls the Philadelphians not to

be deceived whoever follows the person who separates from the truth, as he shall not inherit the kingdom of God. Whoever does not stand against the preacher of falsehood, shall be condemned to hell. It is a duty not to separate from the godly nor to associate with the ungodly. If someone behaves according to a strange heretical opinion, he is not of Christ nor is he a participant of His passion; such a person is a fox (6), a destroyer of the vineyard of Christ. The audience should not be associated with such a person (7), unless they will perish together with him, even if this person may be a closest member of the family (father, son or brother). The Scripture says: "6. Observe the commands of the Lord your God, walking in His ways and revering Him." (8) Therefore, "You rebuke the arrogant, who are cursed and who stray away from your commands." (9) The author does not mean that the Christians should beat or persecute them, as do the heathen "who do not know God." (10) Ignatius tells his Christian audience that they should consider the non - Christians as their enemies and be disconnected from them, while they admonish and exhort them to repentance, if they will hear and submit themselves. Our God loves mankind and "… wants all men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth." (11) Wherefore, "He causes his sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the righteous and unrighteous." (12) The Lord wants us to be His imitators and says about their kindness: "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (13)

Chapter 4: Have but one Eucharist

Ignatius believes that the Philadelphians will not change their mind. Thus, he writes boldly to their love worthy of God and encourages them to have only one faith, one preaching and one Eucharist because there is one flesh of the Lord Jesus Christ, a unique blood of His which was shed on us, one load broken to all and one cup distributed to all. There is one altar for the whole church and one bishop with the presbytery and deacons. There is only one begotten Being, God and Father, one begotten Son, God, the Word and man; there is one Comforter, the Spirit of truth, one preaching, one faith and one baptism (14); there is one church established by the holy apostles from one end of the earth to another by the blood of Christ and by their own sweat and toil. As "a peculiar people and a holy nation" (15), it behoves you to perform all things with harmony in Christ. The wives should be subject to their husbands in the fear God. (16) The virgins should be subject to Christ in purity, not counting marriage as an abomination but desiring the better, not for the reproach of wedlock but for the sake of meditating on the law. Children should obey their parents and have an affection for them as workers together with God for your birth into the world. Servants should be subject to their masters in God, that they may be freedmen of Christ. (17) Husbands should love their wives as fellow - servants of God, as their own body, as the partners of their life and as partners in the procreation of children. Virgins should have only Christ before their eyes, the Father in their prayers, being enlightened by the Spirit. The author wishes to have pleasure in the purity of the Christian believers in the audience as the purity of Elijah, Joshua Ben Nun, Melchizedek, Elisha, Jeremiah or as John the Baptist as the beloved disciple, Timothy, Titus, Evodius and Clement who departed from this life in perfect chastity. (18) The author mentions that he does not blame the other blessed saints for their marriage. Ignatius prays that they were married being found at their feet in the kingdom, as well as at the feet of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, at the feet of Joseph and Isaiah and all the other prophets, as well as at

the feet of Peter and Paul and all the other apostles, all of whom were married. They entered into these marriages due to their consideration of the promulgation of mankind. Further, the Christians should bring up their children "in the training and instruction of the Lord." (19) The Christians should teach their children the Holy Scriptures and trades, so that may not indulge in the idleness. "The father of a righteous man has great joy; he who has a wise son delights in him." (20) The masters should be gentle and honest with their servants (21) because there is one nature and one mankind.
"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor freemale nor female, for you are all in one in Christ Jesus." (22) The governors should be obedient to Caesar; the soldiers should be obedient to their commanders; the deacon should be obedient to the presbyters as high - priests; the presbyters, deacons, the whole clergy together with all the people, soldiers, governors as well as Caesar himself should be obedient to Christ and Christ should be obedient to the Father. Thus, unity is preserved throughout. The widows should not wander around, should not be fond of dainties but should behave like Judith and Anna, eminent for their sobriety. Ignatius declares that that he does not ordain these things as an apostle for he cannot allow himself to pretend to be equal to them (23) since is their *fellow - soldier* (24) who simply admonishes the audience.

Chapter 5: Pray for me (Ignatius)

Ignatius declares that he is greatly enlarged in loving the Philadelphians and seeks to secure their safety. Actually, the Lord Jesus Christ loves the Philadelphians through Ignatius who believes that he is bound for the sake of Jesus and is fearful for not being perfect yet. The prayer of the Philadelphians will make Ignatius perfect for the purpose of attain the purpose for which he was sent, while he flees to the Gospel as the flesh of Jesus Christ and to the apostles as the presbytery of the Church. Ignatius also loves the prophets as the announcers of Christ and as partakers of the same Spirit with the apostles. As the false prophets and false apostles drew to themselves one and the same wicked, deceitful and seducing spirit, the prophets and the apostles received from God, through Jesus Christ, one and the same Holy Spirit, good sovereign (25) and true, the Author of teaching knowledge. There is one God of the Old and New Testament, "one mediator between God and men" for the creation of both intelligent and sensitive beings, in order to exercise a beneficial and suitable providence over them. There is also one Comforter who displayed His power in Moses, the prophets and the apostles. Therefore, all the saints were saved by Jesus Christ, hoping in Him and waiting for Him. Through Chrisy they obtained salvation, being holy, worthy of love and admiration, having testimony borne to them by Jesus Christ in the gospel of our common hope.

Chapter 6: Do not accept Judaism

Shorter Ignatius calls his audience not to listen to the preacher of Judaism. It is better to listen to the Christian doctrine from a circumcised person that to listen to Jeish doctrine from an uncircumcised person. If both persons do not speak about Jesus Christ, Ignatius considers them only monuments and sepulchres of the dead, on which are written only names of dead people. The crowd should flee the wicked devices and snares. Unless they will do that, the members of the crowd will be

conquered by the artifices and grow weak in their love. The crowd should be unified with an undivided heart. Ignatius believes that no one can claim to be overloaded by him.

Longer The preacher of the one God of the law and the prophets who denies that Christ is the Son of God is a liar. This person is falsely called Jew, merely circumcised. The person who confesses Jesus Christ the Lord but denies the God of the law and the prophets, claiming that the Father of Christ is not the Creator of heaven and earth, does not continue in the truth any more than the devil, his father. (26) This person is a disciple of Simon Magus and not of the Holy Spirit. The person who claims that there is one God, confesses Jesus Christ but considers the Lord to be a mere human being and not the only - begotten Son of God (27), the Word of God, imagining Him to consist merely a soul and body, is a serpent preaching deceit and error for the destruction of the human race. Such a person has a poor understanding. The confessor of the truths mentioned above but who calls for lawful wedlock, the procreation of children, the destruction and pollution or imagines certain kinds of abominable food, has the apostate dragon dwelling within him. If anyone confesses the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, praises the creation but calls the incarnation merely an appearance and is ashamed of the passion, he is a denier of faith. Anyone who confesses these things and that God the Word did dwell in the human body as the Word, even if the soul is also in the body because God and not the human soul inhabited it, anyone who claims that the highest pleasure is in happiness, as did the falsely called Nicolaitans, cannot be called a lover of God nor of Christ. Such a person is a corrupter of his own flesh, thus being void of the Holy Spirit and a stranger to Christ. All the persons of this kind are only monuments and sepulchres of the dead, upon which are written only the names of dead men. Thus, the author calls the public to flee the wicked devices and snares of the spirit which now works in the children of this world. (28) Unless these wicked devices of the spirit will be overcome at any time, the members of the public will become weaker in their love. All the audience shall be joined together (29) with an undivided heart and a willing mind, being always of the same opinion about the same things, both in pleasant or dangerous situations, both in sorrow and in joy. The author thanks God for having a good conscience concerning his audience, no one of them being justified to say that he had burdened anyone of them too much or too little.

Chapter 7: I have exhorted you to unity

Although some would have deceived Ignatius by the flesh, his spirit is not deceived because he received it from God. The Spirit knows his source, his destination, its goal where it detects the secrets of the heart. When Ignatius was among the Philadelphians, he cried, spoke loudly the Word of God and encouraged the people to give heed to the bishop, the presbytery and the deacons. Ignatius states that he did not learn anything from any man. The Spirit told Ignatius: "Do nothing without the bishop; keep your bodies as the temples of God; love unity, avoid divisions, be the followers of Paul and the other apostles, even as they also were in Christ."

Chapter 8: The same continued

Ignatius declares that he did what belonged to him as a man devoted to unity. God does not dwell where exists diversity of judgement, wrath and hatred. God grants forgiveness to those who repent if, with a common consent, they return to the unity of Christ and to the communion with the bishop. Ignatius trusts the grace of Jesus Christ that he will rend free all from every bound of wickedness. (30) Therefore, Ignatius exhorts the audience to do nothing out of strife (31) but according to the doctrine of Christ. Ignatius will not believe to those who claim that they did not find the gospels in the archive. To those persons Ignatius may say to those persons that his archives are Jesus Christ. The disobedience of Jesus Christ is manifest destruction. The authentic archives of Ignatius are the cross of Jesus, His death and resurrection as well as the faith which bears on those things. By means of his authentic archives, as mentioned above, Ignatius desires to be justified, through the prayers of the Philadelphians. The one who does not believe the Gospel, does not believe everything along with it. The archives ought not to be preferred in report to the Spirit. (32) It is difficult to disbelieve Christ and to reject the preaching of the apostles.

Chapter 9: The Old Testament is good; the New Testament is better

The priests and the ministers of the Word are good but the High Priest is better. The holy of the holies have been committed to the High Priest, the only one entrusted with the secrets of God. The ministering powers of God are good. The Comforter and the Word are holly. The son of the Father, by whom God made all things, is good and exercises a providence over all of them. This is the way (33) which leads to the Father, the Rock (34), the Defence, the Key, the Shepherd (35), the Sacrifice, the Door (36) of knowledge, through which have entered Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, all the prophets, the apostles and the spouse of Christ. (37) The Gospel has a transcendent element: the appearance of our Saviour Jesus Christ, His passion and the resurrection itself. The prophecies (38) have been fulfilled in the Gospel (39). All these are good together - the law, the prophets, the apostles, the whole company of others who believed through them but only if we love one another.

Chapter 10: Congratulate the inhabitants of Antioch on the close of the persecution

Due to their prayers and their feeling of compassion in Jesus Christ, Ignatius has heard that the church in Antioch, Syria, has peace. As a Church of God, the church of Philadelphia will elect a bishop to act as the ambassador of God for the Philadelphians to the brethren in Antioch who may be granted to meet them and glorify the name of God. Blessed in Jesus Christ is he who shall be deemed worthy of such a ministry. If the Philadelphians will be zealous on this, they will receive glory in Chris. If the Philadelphians are willing, it is not altogether beyond their capability to do this, for the sake of God, as also the nearest Churches have sent in some cases bishops, presbyters and deacons.

Chapter 11: Thank and salutation

Philo the deacon, Gaius and Agathopus also bear testimony in favour of the Philadelphians. Ignatius thanks God that the Philadelphians have received them and the Lord will also receive them. Philo, Gaius and Agathopus should be forgiven

through the grace of Jesus Christ, who wishes not the death of the sinner but his repentance. (40) The brethren salute lovingly the Philadelphians. Burgus had been sent by the Ephesians and Smyrneans in order to show the respect requited by the Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they hope, in flesh and soul, in spirit and faith, in love and concord.

Notes

* Epistle of Ignatius to the Philadelphians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 221 ff

1. Galatians 1:1
2. Luke 1: 5 - 6 [AT]
3. Cf. Jeremiah 23:15
4. Cf. 2 Timothy 3:6 - 7 [AT]
5. 2 Timothy 2:26
6. Cf. Song of Songs 2:15
7. 1 Corinthians 5:11
8. Deuteronomy 8:6 - 9 [AT]
9. Psalms 119:21
10. 1 Thessalonians 4:5
11. 1 Timothy 2:4
12. Matthew 5:45
13. Matthew 5:48
14. Ephesians 4:5
15. 1 Peter 2:9
16. Ephesians 5:22
17. 1 Corinthians 7:22
18. Among the ancient Christian authors prevailed the opinion that the holy people lived in celibacy.
19. Ephesians 6:4
20. Proverbs 23:24
21. Job 31:13 - 15
22. Galatians 3:28
23. See: 1 Samuel 18:18; 2 Samuel 7:18
24. Philippians 2:25
25. Cf. Psalms 60:12
26. Cf. John 8:44
27. John 1:18
28. Cf. Ephesians 2:2
29. Philadelphians 2:2
30. Isaiah 58:6
31. Philippians 2:3
32. Acts 26:14
33. John 14:6
34. 1 Corinthians 10:4
35. John 10:11
36. John 10:9
37. See: St. Alphonsus Liguori, *The True Spouse of Jesus Christ or the Nun Sanctified by the Virtue of Her State*, (Dublin: John Coyne, 1835) [AT]
38. Genesis 49:10
39. Matthew 28:19
40. See: Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:17; 2 Peter 3:9

Introduction

Ignatius (Theophorus) writes to the Church of God, the sublime Father and His beloved Son Jesus Christ. By mercy, the church of Smyrna has obtained every kind of gift, filled with faith and love, most worthy of God and adorned with holiness.

Chapter 1: Thanks to God for your faith

Ignatius glorifies the God and Father of Jesus Christ. Through Jesus, God has given wisdom to the Smyrnaeans. Ignatius mentions that the Smyrnaeans are perfected in a permanent position, as if they were nailed in flesh and spirit to the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The author also mentions that the Smyrnaeans are established in the love for Jesus Christ by means of the blood of Jesus Christ, being fully persuaded that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the first born "over all creation" (2), God the Word, the only - begotten Son and a descendant of David as to his human nature. (3) Jesus was baptized by John, after Jesus told him: "Let it be so now; it is the power for us to do this to fulfil righteousness." (4) Jesus Christ lived a sinless life of holiness and was nailed to the cross under Pontius Pilate and Herod the Tetrach. We derive our being from the divinely blessed passion of Jesus, capable of to establish to all for ages a standard by His resurrection.

Chapter 2: Christ’s true passion

Christ suffered all these things for us; He really suffered and really rose gain. Some unbelievers are ashamed of the creation of man, the cross and death itself. They claim that He took the body of the Virgin only apparently. These unbelievers forget Him who said: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the One and Only, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (5); "Jesus answered them: "Destroy this temple and I will raise it again in three days."" (6); "But I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself." (7) Therefore, "Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars." (8) The Word raised up again His own temple on the third day, after it had been destroyed by the Jews who fought against Christ. When the flesh of Jesus was lifted up, He drew all men to Himself foe their eternal salvation. (9)

Chapter 3: Christ was possessed of a body after His resurrection

Ignatius claims that Christ is possessed of a body at His birth, at His crucifixion, after the resurrection and at the moment of the present epistle. Jesus told his followers: "38. He said to them: "Why are you troubled and why do doubts rise in your minds? 39. Look at my hands and my feet. It is myself! Touch me and see; a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have."" (10) Jesus also told to Thomas: "Put your finger here; see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it into my side. Stop doubting and believe." (11) They immediately believed that He was Christ. Thus, Thomas told Jesus: "My Lord and my God!" (12) On this account, they despised death because only too little indignities and stripes could be told. After His rise, Jesus had shown Himself, not only apparently. He ate and drank with them during forty days. Jesus Christ, after He was sent once by God, was designed to return with the same flesh, joined by glory and power. "Men of Galilee, …, why do

you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in in the same way you have seen him go into heaven." (13) At the end of the world, He will come with the clouds "…and every eye will see him, even those who pierced him and all the peoples of the earth will mourn because of him." (14) When they recognize Him, they will "mourn for him as one mourns for an only child and grieves bitterly for him as one grieves for a firstborn son." (15) Due to their fundamental character, the incorporeal things do not have a form, unlike the shaped creatures.

Chapter 4: Beware of those heretics

Ignatius formulates for the audience advices concerning the heretics. In his view, the heretics are beasts in the shape of men and the Christians should turn away and flee from them. The audience should pray for them that they may return to repentance. If the Lord and Jesus would have been only in appearance, Ignatius would have been only apparently bound. Ignatius states that he has truly surrendered himself to death, fire, sword and wild beasts only for the sake of Jesus as he suffers with Jesus. Ignatius states that he does not have this capability and Jesus strengthens him.

Chapter 5: Their dangerous errors

Some people have foolishly denied Christ or rather have been denied by Him, being the advocates of death rather than of truth. These persons were not persuaded by the prophecies, by the law of Moses, by the Gospel even to this day nor by the individual sufferings which they have endured. What is the profit if a person praises the Christian but blasphemes the Lord Jesus, unaccepting Him to be the incarnated God? Whoever does not confess these facts altogether, deny Him and envelops Him by death. Ignatius believes that the names of those unbelievers should not be mentioned until they repent and return to the true belief in Christ’s passion.

Chapter 6: Unbelievers in the blood of Christ shall be condemned

No one should deceive himself. No one should obtain eternal life unless he believes that Jesus Christ lived in the flesh and shall confess His cross, His passion and the blood He shed for the salvation of the world. This rule is universal for all human beings: a king, or a priest or a ruler or a private person, a master or a servant, a man or a woman. A human being should not become proud by the high social position, dignity and reaches and should not be abases by his low condition or poverty. The main points are faith towards God, hope towards Christ and enjoyment of those good things for which we look and love God and our neighbour. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength." (16) The Lord Jesus says: "A new command I give you: Love one another. As have loved you, so you must love one another." (17) "37. Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. 38. This is the first and greatest commandment. 39. And the second is like it: Love your neighbour as yourself. 40. All the Law and the prophets hang on these two commandments."" (18) Therefore, it should be noticed that those who preach other doctrines claim that the Father of Christ cannot be known. They also exhibit

enmity and deceit in their mutual relations. They have no regard for love, they despise the good things we expect hereafter, they consider the perishable as durable; they ridicule the sufferer and laugh at who is bonded.

Chapter 7: Let us stand aloof from such heretics

Shorter The heretics abstain from Eucharist and from prayer because they do not confess the Eucharist to be the flesh of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who suffered for our sins and who was raised up again by the Father in His goodness. Therefore, those who speak against this gift of God incur death in the midst of their disputes. It would have been better for them to treat this question respectfully. Therefore, it is fitting that the Christians should keep aloof from such persons and not to speak to them privately or publicly. The Christians should rather consider the prophets and, above all, the Gospel, in which the passion of Christ has been revealed to us and the resurrection has been fully proved. The Christians are called to avoid all divisions as the beginning of evils.
Longer The heretics are ashamed of the cross as they mock passion and resurrection. The heretics are the offspring of the spirit author of all evil, which led Adam, by means of his wife, to transgress the commandments, which slew Abel by the hands of Cain (19), which fought against Job (20), which accused Joshua (21). Satan wanted to sift the faith (22) and stirred up the multitude of the Jews against the Lord (23) and who works within those who are disobedient. (24) The Lord Jesus Christ will deliver humanity from these heretics. We have prayed that the faith of the apostles should nor fail (25), not because he was unable by Himself to preserve it but because He rejoiced the eminence of the Father. Therefore, it is fitting that the audience should keep aloof from such persons, not to talk to them privately or publicly but to support and encourage the law, the prophets and the preachers of the word of salvation. The members of the audience should flee from all abominable heresies as well as from those who create schisms as the beginning of evils.

Chapter 8: Let nothing be done without the bishop

All the Christians should be aware to follow the bishop, as Christ follows the Father and the presbytery should follow the apostles. The public should pay reverence to the deacons as those who implement the appointment of God through their office. Without the bishop, no one should be allowed to do anything connected to the Church. This practice should be considered a perfected Eucharist, administrated either by the bishop or a person entrusted by him. The multitude of the people should appear wherever the bishop is present. The presence of the bishop is similar to the presence of Christ, where all the heavenly host stand by, waiting him as the Chief Captain of the Lord’s might and the governor of every intelligent nature. Without the bishop, it is unlawful to baptize, to offer or to present sacrifice. What seems good to the bishop is also well - pleasing to God so that everything the Christians do should be secure and valid.

Chapter 9: Honour the bishop

According to reason, we should return soberness of conduct and exercise repentance towards God as long as we have the opportunity: "No one remembers

you when he is dead. Who praises you from the grave?" (26); "The Lord has made proclamation to the ends of earth. Say to the Daughter of Zion: "See your Savior comes! See his reward with him and his recompense accompanies him."" (27); 21. "Fear the Lord and the king, my son, and do not join with the rebellious, 22. For those two will send sudden destruction upon them and who knows what calamities they can bring?" (28) Ignatius states that God must be honoured indeed as the universal Author and Lord. As high priest, the bishop bears the image of God the ruler and of Christ. After Him, we must honour the king. Among all existing beings, none is beyond God nor even like Him. In the Church, no one is greater than the bishop, who ministers as priest to God for the salvation of the world. Among the rulers, no one can be compared with the king who secures peace and good order to those whom he rules. Who honours the bishop, shall be honoured by God and who dishonours the bishop shall be punished by God. The rebel against the king is justly punishable inasmuch he dissolves the public order. Whoever presumes to do anything without the bishop will be punishable. Whoever presumes to do anything without the bishop, thus destroying the Church and creating confusion concerning its order, is punishable much more severely. Priesthood is the very highest culmination of all good things among humans. If someone is mad enough to strive against the bishop, he actually dishonours God, the First - Born Jesus Christ and the only High Priest by nature of the Father. Therefore, the public should proceed all things with good order in Christ. The laity should be subject to the deacons, who should be subject to the presbyters, who should be subject to Christ, as He is subject to the Father. Ignatius thanks the Christian community of Smyrna for their love, when he is present as well as when he is absent. For their deeds, the Smyrnaeans will be recompensed by God: "Anyone who receives a prophet because he is a prophet will receive a prophet’s award and anyone who receives a righteous man because he is a righteous man will receive a righteous man’s reward." (29) He who honours a prisoner of Jesus Christ shall receive the reward of martyrs.

Chapter 10: Acknowledgment of their kindness

Ignatius declares that the people of Smyrna have acted positively by receiving Philo, Gaius and Agathopus, the servants of God who have followed for the sake of God and who greatly bless the Lord on behalf of the Smyrnaeans because they have refreshed them in every way. Ignatius also wishes that his spirit be on the Smyrnaeans, who have not despised and have not been ashamed of it. Jesus Christ, the perfect hope, will not be ashamed of the Smyrnaeans.

Chapter 11: Request to them to send a message to Antioch

The prayers of the Smyrnaeans reached Antioch. According to the will of God, Ignatius desires to attain God through the prayers of the Smyrnaeans. Therefore, in order to complete its works on earth and in havens, the Church of Smyrna should elect a worthy delegate who, while travelling in Syria, may congratulate now the Christians of Antioch for being at peace and having restored to their proper greatness, their proper constitution being reestablished among them. Ignatius believes that the Smyrnaeans should send to Antioch an envoy with an epistle so that he may rejoice the tranquillity which they have obtained according to the will of God. Ignatius secured Christ as a safe harbour by the prayers of the

Smyrnaeans. As perfect persons, the Smyrnaeans should aim at perfect things. When it is desired to do well, God is ready to help.

Chapter 12: Salutations

Ignatius salutes the Smyrnaeans, their most worthy bishop Polycarp, the venerable presbytery as well as every member of the people. He wishes that grace, mercy, peace and patience should be with the Smyrnaeans in Christ for evermore.

Notes

1. Epistle of Ignatius to the Smyrnaeans in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 239 ff
2. Colossians 1:15; Colossians 1:17 [AT]
3. Romans 1:3
4. Matthew 3:15. See also Matthew 3:13 - 15 [AT]
5. John 1:14
6. John 2:19
7. John 12:32
8. Proverbs 9:1
9. Numbers 21:9; John 3:14 - 15
10. Luke 24:39
11. John 20:27
12. John 20:28

13. Acts 1:11
14. Revelation 1:7
15. Zechariah 12:10
16. Deuteronomy 6:5
17. John 13:34
18. Matthes 22:37 - 40
19. Genesis 4:1 - 8 [AT]
20. Job 1:1 - 22 [AT]
21. Zechariah 3:1
22. Luke 22:1 - 22 [AT]
23. E.g. Acts 14:2 [AT]
24. Ephesians 2:1 - 2 [AT]
25. Luke 22:32
26. Psalms 6:5
27. Isaiah 62:11
28. Proverbs 24:21 - 22
29. Matthew 10:41

Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp (1)

Introduction

Ignatius (Theophorus), bishop of Antioch and witness of Jesus Christ, writes to Polycarp, bishop of the Church of the Smyrnaeans or who has, as his own bishop, God the Father and Jesus Christ. Ignatius wishes to Polycarp abundance of happiness.

Chapter 1: Commendation and exhortation

Ignatius believes to have good proof that the mind of Polycarp is fixed in God as on an immovable rock. Ignatius glorifies the name of God after God thought him worthy to behold the blameless face of Polycarp, which Ignatius enjoys for ever in

God. Ignatius implores Polycarp to continue in his course and to exhort all that may be saved. He advices Polycarp to maintain most carefully his position in flesh and spirit and act according to the following advices which are actually practiced by Polycarp: preserve unity as nothing is better; bear with all as the Lord does to you; support all in love; dedicate yourself to prayer (2); implore for additional understanding, in addition to what you already have; be watchful, having a sleepless spirit; speak separately to each person, as God enables you; accept the infirmities of all (3). Where the labour is great, the gain is all the more greater.

Chapter 2: Exhortations

You do not deserve any gratitude if you love your goods disciples. You should mildly seek to subdue the more troublesome. Every kind of wound is not healed with the same plaster. You should mitigate violent attacks by gentle applications. In all things you should be "shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves." (4) For this purpose, you are composed by both soul and body and you are both material and spiritual, so that you can correct these evils which visibly appear before you. You should pray that the unseen should be revealed to you so that you may not miss anything but abound in every gift. The times call you to pray. As the winds aid the pilot of a ship and as havens are advantageous for safety for a tempest - tossed vessel, the prayer is advantageous for you so that you attain to God. Be sober as a forceful man of God who desires immortality and eternal life, as you are persuaded.

Chapter 3: Exhortations

Do not allow to be filled by those who seem worthy of credit but teach strange doctrines. (5) You should stand firm a does a beaten anvil. It is part of forceful man of God to be wounded and yet to conquer. We ought to bear all things for the sake of God so that God nay bear with us and bring us into His kingdom.

Chapter 4: Exhortations

The widows should not be neglected. After the Lord, the Christian believer should be their protector and friend, who cares about them. Nothing should be done without the consent of the Christian believer and protector to whom the letter is addressed. Nothing should be done without the approval of God. The Christian believer as well as the church on the whole should be steadfast. The male and female slaves should not be despised nor puffed up with conceit but rather they should be allowed to submit themselves, so that may obtain from God a better liberty. They should not be allowed to be set from slavery at the public expense so that they will not be found slaves to their own desires.

Chapter 5: The duties of husbands and wives

People should flee evil arts and even more the public discourse about them. The sisters of Ignatius love the Lord and are satisfied with their husbands in flesh and spirit. Similarly, the brethren should be convinced that they love their wives, as the Lord Jesus loved the Church. (6) If any one can continue in a state of purity (i.e.

celibacy - [AT]), to the honour of the flesh of the Lord, he should be left to remain so without boasting. If he shall boast, he is underdone; if he seeks to be more remarkable than the bishop, he is ruined. The men and women who marry should form their union with the approval of the bishop and their marriage may be according to the Lord and not following their lust. All things should be done to the honour of God. (7)

Chapter 6: The duties of the Christian flock

You should pay attention to the bishop so that God may heed to you. Ignatius states that his soul should be for those submissive to the bishop, to the presbytery and to the deacons. Ignatius calls for mutual labour, to strive to run, to suffer, to sleep and awake together as the stewards, associates and servants of God. All these should please Him, under whom they fight and from whom they will receive their wages. No one should be found to be a deserter. They should let their baptism endure as their arm, their faith as their helmet, their love as their spear and their patience as a complete panoply. Their works should be the change assigned to you and should obtain for them a most worthy recompense. The believers should be long - suffering with one another in meekness and God shall be with them.

Chapter 7: Request that Polycarp would send a messenger to Antioch

Ignatius came to know that the church in Antioch is at peace through the prayers of Polycarp. Ignatius is more encouraged resting without anxiety in God, if indeed he may attain God by means of suffering. Thus, through the prayers of Polycarp, Ignatius may be considered a disciple of Christ. Ignatius tells Polycarp, most blessed in God, that it is fitting to assemble a very solemn council and to elect a much loved and known person who may be designated the messenger of God. This elected person should be charged to go to Syria so that through this action he may glorify the eternal active love to the praise of God. A Christian has no power over himself but he always must be ready for the service of God. When accomplished, this is the work of God as well as the work of Polycarp. Ignatius believes that through grace, Polycarp is prepared for every good work pertaining to God.

Chapter 8: Let other churches also send (messengers) to Antioch

Ignatius could not write to all the churches because he had to sail to Neapolis. Since Polycarp knows the purposes of God, Ignatius suggests that Polycarp should write to the adjacent churches. They will be glorified by an action which will be remembered forever.

Notes

1.Epistle of Ignatius to Polycarp in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 257 ff
2. 1 Thessalonians 5:17
3. Matthew 18:17
4. Matthew 10:16
5. 1 Timothy 1:3 - 4; 1 Timothy 6:3 - 4
6. Ephesians 5:25
7. Cf. 1 Corinthians 10:31

The Spurious Epistles of Ignatius

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Tarsians (1)

Introduction

Ignatius, also called Theophorus, writes to the church of Tarsus, saved in Christ, worthy of praise, worthy of remembrance and worthy of love. Mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be ever multiplied.

Chapter 1: His own sufferings: exhortation to steadfastness

Ignatius declares that he fights beasts from Syria unto Rome. He is not devoured by brute beasts because, by the will of God, Daniel was spared. (2) Ignatius thinks he is devoured by beasts in the shape of men, in whom the merciless wild beast itself lies hid, pricking and wounding him daily. But none of these difficulties count for Ignatius: "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me - the task of testifying to the gospel of God’s grace." (3) Therefore, Ignatius is ready to encounter fire, wild beasts, the sword or the cross so that only he may see Christ, his Saviour and God, who died for him. Consequently, Ignatius considers himself the prisoner of God’s Christ and thus he is driven along by land and sea and exhorts his audience: "Be on your guard; stand firm in the faith; be men of courage; be strong." (4) Ignatius encourages the people to be stable: "…the righteous will live in his faith" (5); "Clearly no one is justified before God by the law because "The righteous will live by faith"" (6) You should be unwavering for the Lord causes those to dwell in a house who are of one and the same character. (7)

Chapter 2: Cautions against false doctrine

Ignatius declares having learned that certain ministers of Satan intended to disturb the people of Tarsus, some of them asserting that Jesus was born (only) in appearance. Others claim that He is not the Son of the Creator and He is Himself God over all. Another group of ministers of Satan claim that He is a mere man while others sustain that this flesh ids not to rise again, so that our proper course is to live and partake of a life of pleasure because this is the chief good to beings who are to perish shortly. A multitude of such evils has burst upon us but you have not given but "We did not give in to them for a moment, so that the truth of the gospels might remain in you." (8) You are the fellow - citizens as well as the disciples of Paul who said: "18. I will not venture to speak of anything except what Christ has accomplished through me in leading the Gentiles to obey God by what I have said and done 19. By the power of signs and miracles through the power of the Spirit. From Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum, I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ." (9) Paul bear about the "marks of Christ" in his flesh. (10)

Chapter 3: The true doctrine respecting Christ

The public is mindful of Jesus Christ and, by all means, it knows that the Lord was truly born of Mary, being made of a woman. The people also know that Jesus Christ was truly crucified because he says: "May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ through which the world has been crucified to me and (I was) crucified to the world." (11) And He really suffered, died and rose again. For Paul says: "22. But I have had God's help to this very day and so I stand here and testify to small and great alike. I am saying nothing beyond what the prophets and Moses said would happen 23. That the Christ would suffer and, as the first to rise from the dead, would proclaim light to his own people and to the Gentiles." (12) And again: "The death he died, he died to sin once for all but the life he lives, he lives to God." (13) Otherwise, if Christ has not died, what advantage would be in becoming subject to bonds? What advantage would there be in patience and enduring stripes? For what reason should we accept the following facts: Peter was crucified, Paul and James were slain with the sword, John was banished to Patmos, Stephen was stoned to death by the Jews who killed the Lord? In truth, we should accept the facts previously mentioned because none of these sufferings were in vain: the Lord was really crucified by the ungodly.

Chapter 4: Continuation

You also know that He, who was born of a woman, was the Son of God and He who was crucified was the "firstborn over all creation and God the Word who also created all things by him and for him. (14) The Apostle Paul says: "Yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and from whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live." (15) "For there is one God and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus." (16)
"16. For by him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers of authorities; all things were created by him and for him. 17. He is before all things and in him all things hold together." (17)

Chapter 5: Refutation of the previously mentioned errors

Jesus Christ Himself is not God over all and Father but His Son: "Jesus said: "Do not hold on to me, for I have not yet returned to the Father. Go instead to my brothers and tell them: I am returning to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God."" (18) And again: "When he has done this, then the Son himself will be made subject to him who put everything under him so that God may be all in all." (19) Therefore, it is one Person who put all things under and who is all in all and another Person to whom they were subdued, who also Himself, along with other things, becomes subject to the former.

Chapter 6: Continuation (20)

The Word is not a mere man, by whom and in whom all things were made; all things were made by God. (21) "27. I was there when he set the heavens in place, when he marked out the horizon on the face of the deep." "30. Then I was the

craftsman at his side. I was filled with delight day after day, rejoicing always in his presence." (22) And how could a mere man be addressed in such words: "The Lord says to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand."" (23) (24) How could such one declare: "I tell you the truth, Jesus answered, before Abraham was born, I am!" (25) "And now, Father, glorify me in your presence with the glory I had with you before the world began." (26) What man could ever say: "For I have come down from heaven not to do my will but to do the will of him who sent me." (27) Of what man could it be said: "8. He himself was not the light; he came only as a witness to the light. 9. The true light that gives light to every man was coming into the world. 10. He was in the world and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. 11. He came to that which was his own but his own did not receive him." (28) How could such one could be a mere man receiving the beginning of His existence from Mary and not rather God the Word and the only - begotten Son? "1. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. 2. He was with God in the beginning. 3. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made." (29) In another place it is written: "22. The Lord brought me forth as the first of his works, before his of old; 23. I was appointed from eternity, from the beginning, before the world began. 24. When there were no oceans, I was given birth, when there were no springs abounding with water; 25. Before the mountains were settled in place..." (30)

Chapter 7: Continuation

He shows that our bodies are to rise again when he says: "I tell you the truth, a time is coming and has now come when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God and those who hear will live." (31) The Apostle also says: "For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable and the mortal with immortality." (32) He shows that we must live soberly and righteously: "9. Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral and idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders 10. Nor thieves nor greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (33) If these are our conditions and feelings, how are humans different from the animals like asses and dogs who do not care about the future and care only about their food. These animals have no intelligence moving in them.

Chapter 8: Exhortations to holiness and good order

Ignatius wishes the people of Tarsus to enjoy in God; he calls them to be sober, to set aside malice and beast - like fury, evil - speaking, calumny, filthy speaking, vulgarity, whispering, arrogance, drunkenness, lust, avarice, vainglory and everything akin to these. "Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the sinful nature." (34) The presbyters should be subject to the bishop; the deacons should be subject to the presbyters; the people should be subject to the presbyters and deacons. Ignatius wishes that his soul should be for those who preserve this good order and may God be with them permanently.

Chapter 9: Exhortations to the discharge of relative duties

Husbands should love their wives, who should love their husbands. The children should venerate their parents, who should bring up their children in the training and instruction of the Lord. (35) People should honour those who continue in virginity, as priestesses of Christ. People should also honour the widows who persevere in the gravity of behaviour as the altar of God. The servants should wait upon their masters with respectful fear and the masters should order to their servants with tenderness. No one among the people should be idle for idleness is the source of want. Ignatius mentions that he brings to the attention of his public all the above content as a Christian and brother.

Chapter 10: Salutations

Ignatius wishes to enjoy the prayers of the people from Tarsus and asks them to pray that he may attain Jesus. The people should greet one another with a holy kiss of love. (36)

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to the Tarsians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 455 ff.
2. Daniel 6 (Daniel in the Den of Lions) [AT]
3. Acts 20:24
4. 1 Corinthians 16:13
5. Habakkuk 2:4
6. Galatians 3:11
7. Psalms 68:7
8. Galatians 2:5
9. Romans 15:18 - 19
10. Galatians 6:17
11. Galatians 6:14
12. Acts 26:22 - 23

13. Romans 6:10
14. Colossians 1:15 - 16
15. 1 Corinthians 8:6
16. 1 Timothy 2:5
17. Colossians 1:16 - 17
18. John 20:17
19. 1 Corinthians 15:28
20. According to the New Testament sources cited here, the subject treated is the *Holy Spirit* or *Word* in the theological sense. Thus, we have replaced the term *He*. [AT]
21. John 1:1 - 3: "1. In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.
2. He was with God in the beginning. 3. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made."
22. Proverbs 8:27, 30 (Here wisdom is personified - [AT])
23. Psalms 110:1
24. Thus, Jesus was made second in authority to God himself. For the exaltation of Jesus to this position see, for example, Matthew 26:64, Mark 14:62, Mark 16:19, Luke 22:69. [AT]
25. John 8:58
26. John 17:5
27. John 6:38
28. John 1:8 - 11
29. John 1:1 - 3
30. Proverbs 8:22 - 25. Cf. Proverbs 8:
26 - 29 [AT]
31. John 5:25
32. 1 Corinthians 15:53
33. 1 Corinthians 6:9 - 10. See also 1 Corinthians 15:13 - 32
34. Romans 13:14
35. Ephesians 6:4
36. 1 Peter 5:14

Epistle of Ignatius to the Antiochians (1)

Introduction

Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to the church sojourning in Syria, which has obtained mercy from God and has been elected by Christ and which first (2) received the name of Christ, wishes happiness in God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 1: Cautions against errors

Ignatius declares that the Lord has rendered his own bonds light and easy since he had learned that the people of Antiochia are in peace and live in all harmony, both in flesh and spirit: "As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received." (3), guarding against those heresies of the wicked which have broken upon us, to the deceiving and destruction of those that accept them. However, you are aware to the doctrine of the apostles and believe both in the law and in the prophets. Yet, you reject every Jewish and Gentile error; you do not introduce a multiplicity of gods and do not deny Christ, pretending to maintain the unity of God.

Chapter 2: The true doctrine respecting God and Christ

Moses, the faithful servant of God, said: "Hear Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one" (4). Jesus said that the most important commandment is this: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one." (5) Thus, Moses proclaimed that there is only one God but forthwith confessed the Christian Lord as he said: "Then the Lord rained down burning sulphur on Sodom and Gomorrah". (6) "26. Then God said: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth and over all creatures that move along the ground." 27. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female he created them." (7) "When God created man, He made him in the likeness of God." (8) "…in the image of God has God made man." (9) Moses shows that the Son of God was to be made man when he says: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me among your own brothers. You must listen to him." (10), (11), (12).

Chapter 3: The same continued

When they speak as in the person of God saying "I am the first and I am the best; apart from me there is no God" (13), the prophets speak also of our Lord Jesus Christ. They say: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace." (14) Concerning His incarnation, they say: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel." (15), (16). Concerning the passion (oppression), they say: "He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth." (17)

Chapter 4: Continuation

When they declared that the one Father was "the only true God" (18), the Evangelists (Apostles) did not omit what concerned our Lord but wrote: "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." (19) Concerning the incarnation, the Evangelists said: "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory of the One and Only who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (20) The apostles said that there is one God (21) and one mediator between God and men; Jesus Christ dedicated Himself for the life and salvation of the world. (22)

Chapter 5: Denunciation of false teachers

Therefore, whosoever declares that there is only one God in order to take away the divinity of Christ is a devil (23) and an enemy of all righteousness. Whosoever confesses Christ but not as the Son of the Creator of the world but of some other unknown being, different from God, proclaimed by the law and the prophets, is an instrument of the devil. Whosoever rejects the incarnation and is ashamed of the cross for which Ignatius is in bonds is an antichrist. (24) The person who claims that Christ is a mere man is accursed according to the prophet (25) since he does not trust God but man. Therefore, this person is also unfruitful.

Chapter 6: Renewed cautions

The author mentions that his intention was to put the audience on guard, as a father does for his children. Therefore, the author warns the audience of those that hasten to work mischief, of those "enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose glory is in their shame." (26) The people should be aware of "dumb dogs", trailing serpents, dragons, asps and scorpions because these are subtle wolves and apes that mimic the appearance of men.

Chapter 7: Exhortations to the consistency of conduct

The members of the Christian community had been disciples of Paul and Peter; they are advised not to lose what has been committed to their trust. You should remember Euodia. (27) By their behaviour, the Christians should prove themselves to be the true - born children of God. "If anyone does not love the Lord - a be on him. Come, O Lord!" (28)

Chapter 8: Exhortations to the presbyters and others

As a fellow elder, a witness of Christ's sufferings and one who also will share in the glory to be revealed, Peter tells the elders: "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers - not because you must but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money but eager to serve." (29) "8. …I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord for whose sake I have lost all things, …, that I may gain Christ 9. And be found in Him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law but that which is through faith in Christ - the righteousness that comes from God and is by faith." (30) Let the deacons know of what dignity they are, let them study to be blameless so that they may be the followers of Christ. Let the people be subject to the presbyters and the deacons. Let the virgins know to whom they have consecrated themselves.

Chapter 9: Duties of husbands, wives, parents and children

The husbands should love their wives remembering that at the creation, one woman was given to one man. The wives should honor their husbands as their own person. The wives should presume to address their husbands by their names. (31) The wives should be chaste, reckoning their husbands as their only partners, to whom they have been united according to the will of God. The parents should

impart a holy preparation for their children. The children should honor their parents so that they may enjoy long life on earth. (32)

Chapter 10: Duties of masters and servants

The masters should not treat their servants with haughtiness but should imitate the patient Job who says: "13. If I have denied justice to my menservants and maid servants when they had a grievance against me 14. What will I do when God confronts me? What will I answer when called to account?" (33)
The servants should not provoke masters to anger in anything unless they become the authors of incurable mischiefs to themselves.

Chapter 11: Inculcation of various moral duties

Christians have several moral duties. No one should be addicted to eating while idle. (34) The Christians should diminish among themselves drunkenness, anger, envy, abuse, clamour and blasphemy. (35) The widows should not be allowed to live a life of pleasure, lest they become unrestrained and capricious. (36) Ignatius suggests that the believers should be subject to Caesar in everything, as far as this subjection does not imply spiritual danger. The Christian believers should not provoke wrath to the ruler so that no occasion for it will be given to those that seek for magic, the impure love of boys and murder are forbidden crimes even for the gentiles as they are for the Christians. Ignatius mentions that he does not issue commands as an apostle but only calls for the attention of the public about these subjects.

Chapter 12: Salutations

Ignatius salutes the holy presbytery, the sacred deacons, the sub - deacons, the readers, the singers, the doorkeepers, the labourers, the exorcists, the confessors, the keepers of the holy gates, the deaconesses of Christ.

Chapter 13: Salutations continued

Ignatius salutes Cassian and his partner. Polycarp, the most worthy bishop, salutes the Antiochians. The whole church from Smyrna is mindful of the prayers. Ignatius mentions the salutations of Onesimus, Polybius bishop of Tralles and Damas, bishop of Magnesia. "Greet one another with a holy kiss." (37)

Chapter 14: Conclusion

The author wrote the present letter from Philippi. He wishes his audience that only God, who is unbegotten, will keep the audience steadfast in spirit and flesh through Him, who was begotten before the beginning of the ages. The author wishes to behold the members of his audience in the Kingdom of Christ; he wishes them to farewell in God and in Christ, being enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to the Antiochians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 461 ff.
2. Cf. Acts 11:25 - 26: "25. Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to look for Saul 26. And when he found him, he brought him to Antioch and so, for a whole year, Barnabas and Saul met with the church and taught great numbers of people. The disciples were called Christians first at Antioch."
3. Ephesians 4:1
4. Deuteronomy 6:4
5. Mark 12:29
6. Genesis 19:24
7. Genesis 1: 26 - 27
8. Genesis 5:1
9. Genesis 9:6
10. Deuteronomy 18:15
11. Acts 3:22: "For Moses said: "The Lord your God will raise up for you a prophet like me from among your own people; you must listen to everything he tells you.""
12. Acts 7:37: "This is that Moses who told the Israelites: "God will send you a prophet like me from your own people.""
13. Isaiah 44:6
14. Isaiah 9:6
15. Isaiah 7:14
16. Matthew 1:23. Immanuel means "God with us".
17. Isaiah 53:7. Cf. Jeremiah 11:19
18. John 17:3
19. John 1:1
20. John 1:14
21. 1 Corinthians 8:6
22. 1 Timothy 2:5
23. Cf. John 6:70
24. 1 John 2:22; 1 John 4:3; 2 John 7
25. Jeremiah 17:5
26. Philippians 3:18 - 19
27. Philippians 4: 2 - 3
28. 1 Corinthians 16:22

29. 1 Peter 5:2
30. Philippians 3:8 - 9 [AT]
31. Cf. 1 Peter 3:6
32. Ephesians 6:1 - 3
33. Job 31:13 - 14
34. 2 Thessalonians 3:10
35. Ephesians 5:3
36. 1 Timothy 5:6, 11
37. 2 Corinthians 13:12

Epistle of Ignatius to Hero, a deacon of Antioch (1)

Introduction

Ignatius (Theophorus) writes to Hero, the deacon of Christ and servant of God, a man honoured and most dearly loved and esteemed who carries Christ and the Spirit within him and who is the son of Ignatius in faith and love.

Chapter 1: Exhortations to earnestness and moderation

Ignatius exhorts Hero in God so that Hero will speed to his course and will vindicate his dignity. He should care to preserve concord with the saints and bear the burden of the weak: "Carry each other’s burdens and, in this way, you will fulfil the law of Christ." (2) Ignatius formulates several rules of the correct behaviour. Hero should devote himself to fasting and prayer but he may not destroy himself thereby. "Everything that lives and moves will be food for you." (3) Attention should also be given to reading (4) for the knowledge of the laws but also for the explanation (teaching) of the laws to others, as the earnest servant of God.

Chapter 2: Cautions against false teachers

Whoever teaches anything beyond what is commanded, should be considered a wolf in a sheep’s clothing (5) labouring for the destruction of the sheep, although he is fasting, lives in continence works miracles and has the gift of prophecy. If anyone denies the cross and is ashamed of the passion, you should consider him, the adversary himself. You should consider as abominable the person who has no love: "2. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge and I have a faith that can move mountains but I have not love, I am nothing. 3. If I give all I possess to the poor and surrender my body to the flames, but I have no love, I gain nothing." (6) You should consider as antichrist the person who facilitates the law or the prophets fulfilled by Christ at his coming.

Chapter 3: Exhortations as to ecclesiastical duties

"Give proper recognition to those widows who are really in need." (7) Be the friend of orphans: "A father to the fatherless, a defender of the widows is God in His holy dwelling." (8) You should do nothing without the bishops for they are priests and you are a servant of the priests, who baptize, offer sacrifice, ordain and lay on hands. You are delegated to them as the holy Stephen did in Jerusalem to James and the presbyters. Do not neglect the sacred meetings. "Do not let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." (9)

Chapter 4: Servants and women are not to be despised

You should not be ashamed of servants because we have the same nature in common with them. Do not abominate women because they gave you birth and brought you up. Therefore, it is fitting to love the authors of our birth (but only in the Lord), inasmuch as man cannot produce children without a woman. Therefore, it is right that we should honour those who have has a part in giving us birth. "In the Lord, however, woman is not independent of man, nor is man independent of woman." (10), except in the case of those who were first created. The body of Adam was made out of four elements and the body of Eve was made out of the side of Adam. The birth of the Lord was of a virgin alone, not as if the lawful union of man and wife was abominable but because such kind of birth was fitting to God. It became the Creator not to make use of the ordinary method but of a strange and singular method of generation.

Chapter 5: Various relative duties

You should flee from naughtiness "for the Lord resists the proud but gives grace to the humble". (11)
"Thou shalt destroy all them that speak lies." (12) Defend against envy because devil is its author. Cain is its successor; he envied his brother and committed murder out of envy. We should exhort our sisters to love God and be content with their own husbands only. Similarly, we should exhort men to be content with their own wives. We should watch over the virgins as the precious treasures of Christ. You should be patient because the patient man has great understanding. (13) Do not neglect the poor as far as you are prosperous: "Through love and faithfulness sin is atoned for; through the fear of the Lord a man avoids evil." (14)

Chapter 6: Exhortations to purity and caution

Ignatius calls Hero to keep himself as the habitation of God as he is the temple of Christ and an instrument of the Spirit. Hero knows how he had been brought up by Ignatius. Due to his modesty, Ignatius says about himself that he is the least of men. He urges Hero to imitate his behaviour. Ignatius exhorts Hero as his own son: "Let him who boasts boast in the Lord." (15) Ignatius wishes to have joy of Hero, as his guardian may be God and the Lord Jesus Christ. Ignatius advises Hero not to believe all persons, not to have confidence in them and not to be influenced by their flattery. (16)

Chapter 7: Solemn charge to Hero, as future bishop of Antioch

Remember God and you will never sin. Be sincere in your prayers because the undoubtful is blessed. Ignatius believes that God, the Father of His only - begotten Son, will show him that Hero is on his throne. Ignatius charges Hero before God of the universe, before Christ, in the presence of the Holy Spirit and of the ministering ranks of angels to keep in safety the asset committed to him by Ignatius and Christ. Hero should not judge himself unworthy of the things which had been shown by God. Ignatius states that he hands over to Hero the Church of Antioch and announces him that he has commended Hero to Polycarp in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Chapter 8: Salutations

The bishops Onesimus, Damas, Polybius and all from Philippi salute Hero on Christ. Salute the presbytery worthy of God, the fellow deacons of whom Ignatius may have joy in Christ, both in flesh and spirit. Salute by name from the smallest to the greatest, the people of the Lord. Ignatius commits the Christians to Hero, as Moses did to Joshua, the leader who followed him. Ignatius asks that Hero should not consider what he said as presumptuous. The Christians are not as the Israelis were but at least that pray to be so, since they are the children of Abraham. Therefore, Ignatius urges Hero to be strong like a hero and like a man. Henceforth, Hero will lead the people in Antioch and "…the Lord’s people will not be like a sheep without a shepherd." (17)

Chapter 9: Concluding salutations and instructions

Ignatius urges Hero to salute Cassian his host as well as his most serious - minded partner in life as well as their very dear children, to whom may "God grant that they find mercy of the Lord in that day." (18) Hero is called to salute all the faithful in Christ from Laodicea and not to neglect those from Tarsus. Ignatius salutes Maris, the bishop of Neapolis. Ignatius asks Hero to salute also his daughter Mary, distinguished for gravity, erudition and "the church in her house" (19), being the pattern of pious women. Ignatius wishes that Hero be preserved in good health and hight repute in all things to a very old age, for the benefit of the Church of God.

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to Hero, a deacon of Antioch in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 467 ff.
2. Galatians 6:2
3. Genesis 9:3
4. Cf. 1 Timothy 4:13
5. Cf. Matthew 7:15
6. 1 Corinthians 13:2 - 3
7. 1 Timothy 5:3
8. Psalms 68:5
9. 1 Timothy 4:12
10. 1 Corinthians 11:11

11. James 4:6; 1 Peter 5:5
12. Psalms 5:6
13. Proverbs 14:29
14. Proverbs 16:6
15. 1 Corinthians 1:31; 2 Corinthians 10:17
16. Ecclesiastes 3:17 - 18 [AT]
17. Numbers 27:17
18. 2 Timothy 1:18
19. Colossians 4:15

Epistle of Ignatius to the Philippians (1)

Introduction

Ignatius (Theophorus) wrote this letter to the church of God in Philippi which has obtained mercy in faith, true patience and love. Mercy and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: "...we have put our hope in the living God who is the Saviour of all men and especially of those who believe." (2)

Chapter 1: Reason for writing the epistle

Ignatius is mindful of the love of the Philippians and their zeal in Christ, which they have shown to the Christians. Therefore, Ignatius considered that it is fitting to write to the Philippians who display such a godly and spiritual love of the

brethren (literally, "to your brother - loving spiritual love according to God"), to make the audience remember the Christian course as Paul admonished you: "I appeal to you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another so that there may be no divisions among you and that you may pe perfectly united in mind and thought." (3) If there is one God of the universe, the Father of Christ, "from whom all things came" (4), one Holy Spirit who wrought (5) in Moses and in the apostles; one baptism which is managed so that we should have fellowship with the death of the Lord; one elect church - then there likewise ought to be but one faith in respect tot Christ. "4. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called - 5. one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6. One God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (6)

Chapter 2: Unity of the three Divine Persons

There is only one God and Father and there is no other besides the only true God. The Scripture says: "Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one." (7) And again: "Have we not all one Father? Did not one God create us? Why do we profane the covenant of our fathers by breaking faith with one another?" (8) There is also one Son: "No one has ever seen God but God the One and Only", who is at the Father's side, has made him known." (9) "Yet fore us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live." (10) Elsewhere, the following question is formulated: "…What is his name and the name of his son? Tell me if you know!" (11) "4. There is one body and one Spirit - just as you were called to one hope when you were called 5. One Lord one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all." (12) "For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body - whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free - and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." (13) Then, there are not three Fathers or three Sons or three Paracletes but one Father, one Son and one Paraclete. When the Lord sent forth the apostles to make disciples of all nations, He commanded them to "19. …go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit 20. and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (14)

Chapter 3: Christ was truly born and died, etc.

Only the Son became incarnated in reality, not in appearance or imagination. "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us." (15) "Wisdom has built her house; she has hewn out its seven pillars." (16) God the Word was born as man, with a body, of the Virgin, without any intercourse of man: "Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign: the virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son and will call him Immanuel." (17) Then, he was truly born, truly grew up, truly ate and drank, was truly crucified, died and rose again. He who believes in these things, as they really were and as they took place, is blessed. He who does not believe is no less accursed than those who crucified the Lord. The prince of this world rejoices when anyone denies the cross in his own destruction. This is the trophy which has been raised up against his power; when he sees it, he shudders and when he hears of it, is afraid.

Chapter 4: The malignity and folly of Satan

Before the cross was erected, Satan was eager that it should be so and elaborated with care the spirit of the disobedient. (18) The Satan moulded in Judas, in the Pharisees, in the Sadducees, in the old and young and in the priests. When it was just about to be erected, the Satan was troubled and infused repentance into the traitor, pointed him to a rope to hang himself and taught him to die by strangulation. The Satan terrified also the silly woman, disturbing her by dreams, He, who tried every means to have the cross prepared, endeavoured now to discontinue its erection. The Satan was not influenced by repentance on account of the greatness of its crime (for, in this case, he would not be utterly depraved) but because he perceived his own destruction to be at hand. The Cross of Christ was the beginning of its condemnation, death and destruction. Therefore, the Satan works in some in order to make them deny the Cross, to be ashamed of the passion, to call the death an appearance, to mutilate and explain away the birth of the Virgin and to calumniate the human nature itself as abominable. The Satan fights along with the Jews for the denial of the Cross; the Satan fights with the Gentiles for the calumniating of Mary, being heretical in holding that Christ possessed a mere phantasmal body. The Satan is leader of all wickedness and beguiler of man, inconsistent and ever contradicting himself, projecting one courser and then following another. The Satan is full of ignorance on account of his voluntary lack of reason. How can Satan be perceived about something else when he does not perceive reason which lies at his very feet?

Chapter 5: Apostrophe to Satan

If the Lord would have been a mere human being, with merely a body and soul, why do you mutilate and explain that He was born with a common nature of humanity? Why do you call the passion a mere appearance, as it were a strange thing occurring to a mere human being? Why do you consider the death of a mortal to be simply an imaginary death? On the other hand, if He is both God and man, why do you consider unlawful to style Him "the Lord of glory" (19) who is by nature unchangeable? Why do you say that it is unlawful of the Law - giver who has a human soul, "The Word became flesh" (20) and was a perfect man and not merely one dwelling in man? How came into existence this magician, who of old formed all nature which can be apprehended either by the senses or by intellect, according to the will of the Father and when He became incarnate, healed every kind of disease and infirmity? (21)

Chapter 6: Continuation

When there is no sin, none of these created things are shameful, none of them are evil but all very good. If the human being does not see these things due to his blindness, he vilifies them.

Chapter 7: Inconsistency of Satan

The author formulates several questions about the Father and Jesus in order to prove the inconsistency and ignorance of Satan.

Chapter 8: Continuation: ignorance of Satan

Many things are not known to the Satan. (22) The author mentions the ignorance of Satan concerning the following subjects: the virginity of Mary; the wonderful birth; who it was that became incarnate; the star which guided those who were in the east; the Magi who presented gifts; the salutation of the archangel to the Virgin; the marvellous conception of her that was betrothed; the announcement of the boy - fore - runner rejecting the son of the Virgin and his leaping in the womb on account of what was foreseen; the songs of the angels over Him that was born; the glad tidings announced to the shepherds; the fear of Herod lest his kingdom should be taken from him; the command to slay the infants; the removal into Egypt and the return from that country to the same region; the infant swaddling bands; the human registration; the nourishing by means of milk; the name of the father given to him who did not beget; the manger because there was no room elsewhere; no human preparation (for the child); the gradual growth, human speech, hunger, thirst, journeyings, weariness; the offerings of sacrifices and then circumcision, baptism; the voice of God over Him that was baptized as to who He was and whence He had become; the testimony of the Spirit and the Father from above; the voice of John the prophet when it signified the passion by the appellation of "the Lamb"; the performance of diverse miracles, manifold healings; the rebuke of the Lord ruling both the sea and the winds; evil spirits expelled; you yourself, subjected to torture and, when afflicted by the power of him who had been manifested, not having the power to do anything. The conclusion is that Satan does not have the power to do anything.

Chapter 9: Continuation: ignorance of Satan

Seeing all that, the multitude was in utter perplexity and did not know that a virgin should be worshipped. The multitude was astonished by the song of praise of the of the angels, the adoration of the Magi and the appearance of the star. The multitude reverted to its state of wilful ignorance because all the circumstances seemed to be on account of the paltry things, which seemed unworthy of God. You saw a man without food during forty days and nights, along with ministering angels. You did not shudder of the presence of the angels, when you saw Him baptized as a common man and you did not know the reason. After His lengthened fast, you assumed again your customary audacity, knowing that He was hungry: "If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become bread." (23) This expression indicates ignorance. If you had real knowledge, you would have understood that the Creator can with the same easiness both create what does not exist and change what already exists. You tempted by hunger Him who nourishes all that need food. You tempted the very Lord of glory (24). You forgot in your malevolence that it is written: "Man does bot live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God." (25) If you had known that He was the Son of God, you would have understood that he who has kept his body any want for forty days and forty nights, could have done the same for ever. Then, why does he suffer hunger? He suffers hunger in order to prove that he had assumed a body subject to the same feelings as those of ordinary humans. By the first fact He showed that He was God and, by the second fact, He had shown that He was also human.

Chapter 10: Continuation: audacity of Satan

The Lord said: "I saw Satan fall from the heightening from heaven." (26) Satan dares to say to the Lord: "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down." (27) How the Satan could dare to say such things to whom the things that are not are reckoned as if they were (28) and provoke to a display of vainglory the Lord who was free from all ostentation? The Satan pretended to read in the Scripture about the Lord: "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down. For it is written: "He will command his angels concerning you and they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone."" (29) At the same time, Satan pretended to be ignorant of the rest, furtively concealing the prediction of the Scripture about the Satan and his servants. (30)

Chapter 11: Continuation: audacity of Satan

Therefore, if Satan is trodden on under the feet of the Lord, how does Satan tempt the untemptable Lord, forgetting the principle of the lawgiver: "Do not test the Lord your God as you did at Massah." (31)
Satan even dares to appropriate the works of God to himself and states that the dominion over these was given to him and he can give it to anyone he wants. (32) Satan sets forth his own fall and promises to give the Lord what really belongs to Him. (33) How the wicked spirit of Satan did not shudder to utter such words concerning the Lord? Satan was overcome by his unrestrained appetite and was dishonoured by his vainglory. Through avarice and ambition, the Satan draws on others to ungodliness. Satan in Belial, dragon, apostate, crooked serpent, rebel against God, outcast from Christ, alien from the Holy Spirit, exile from the ranks of the angels, abuser of the laws of God, enemy of all that is lawful, who rose against the first created humans; Satan rose up against Abel the murderous Cain; Satan took up arms against Job. Satan is a runaway and incorrigible slave, a rebel against the good Lord.

Chapter 12: The meek reply of Jesus

The Lord is long - suffering and does not invalidate the one who, in his ignorance, dares to say such words; the Lord meekly replies: "Away from me, Satan!". (34) He does not say to Satan "Get behind me" because it is not possible that he should be converted but tells him "Begone, Satan" to the course chosen by Satan. "Begone" to those things to which, due to your malevolence, you have been called. The Lord knows who He is, by whom He had been sent and who He should worship. "…it is written: "Worship the Lord your God and serve Him only."" (35) "Fear the Lord your God, serve Him only and take your oaths in his name." (36) Jesus declares that He knows the one God; Jesus says that He is acquainted with the only Lord from the Satan became an apostate. Jesus declares that He is not an enemy of God, He acknowledges His pre- eminence. Jesus knows the Father who is the author of His generation.

Chapter 13: Various exhortations and directions

The author mentions that he had felt compelled to all these things as a result due his affection for his audience. As a brother, Ignatius exhorts his audience with

a view of the glory of God. The Christians should be subjected to the ecclesiastical hierarchy: the bishop, the presbyters and the deacons. People should love one another in the Lord as being images of God. Married people should deeply love each other. The person living in chastity or continence should not be allowed to change anything, unless the reward is lost. The festivals should not be lightly esteemed. The period of the forty days should not be despised because it comprises an imitation of the Lord's conduct. After the week of passion, the crowd neglect the fast of the forty sixth day, distributing at some time to the poor from the abundance of the crowd. If anyone fasts on the Lord's day or on Sabbath, except on the paschal Sabbath only, he is a murderer of Christ.

Chapter 14: Farewells and cautions

Ignatius wishes that the prayers of the Christians will extend to the Church of Antioch, from where Ignatius was led as prisoner to Rome. Ignatius salutes the holy bishops Polycarp and Vitalis as well as the sacred presbytery and the fellow deacons. Ignatius declares that his soul may be found in their stead. If anyone celebrates Passover along with the Jews or accepts the emblems of their feast, he participated with those who killed the Lord and His apostles.

Chapter 15: Salutations. Conclusion

Philo and Agathopus the deacons salute the Philippians. Ignatius salutes the company of virgins and the order of widows as well as the people of the Lord, from the least to the greatest. Ignatius had sent the present letter through Euphanius the reader. Ignatius asks the audience to remember his bonds (37) that he may be made perfect in Christ. Ignatius wishes to the members of the crowd to fare well in the flesh, the soul and the spirit, while thinking about perfect things and turn away from the workers of iniquity who corrupt the word truth. Ignatius wishes the audience to be strengthened by the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to the Philippians in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 473 ff.
2. 1 Timothy 4:1
3. 1 Corinthians 1:10
4. 1 Corinthians 8:6
5. 1 Corinthians 12:11
6. Ephesians 4:5
7. Deuteronomy 6:4; Mark 12:29
8. Malachi 2:10
9. John 1:18
10. 1 Corinthians 8:6
11. Proverbs 30:4
12. Ephesians 4:4 - 6
13. 1 Corinthians 12:11

14. Matthew 28:19
15. John 1:14
16. Proverbs 9:1
17. Isaiah 7:14
18. Ephesians 2:2
19. 1 Corinthians 2:8
20. John 1:14
21. Matthew 4:23; Matthew 9:35
22. Many Fathers of the Church believed that Satan was in great ignorance as to the multitude of subjects connected with Christ.
23. Matthew 4:3. The full source is: "
24. 1 Corinthians 2:8
25. Matthew 4:4
26. Luke 10:18
27. Matthew 4:6
28. Cf. Romans 4:17
29. Matthew 4:6
30. Psalms 91:13
31. Deuteronomy 6:16
32. Luke 4:6
33. Matthew 4:9 - 10
34. Matthew 4:10
35. Matthew 4:10
36. Deuteronomy 6:13
37. Cf. Colossians 4:18

The Epistle of Maria the proselyte to Ignatius (1)

Introduction

Mary of Gassobelae (Maria Castabalistis) (2), a proselyte of Jesus Christ, writes to Ignatius Theophorus, most blessed bishop of the apostolic Church in Antioch, beloved in God the Father and Jesus: Happiness and safety, we always beg for your joy and health in Him.

Chapter 1: Occasion of the epistle

To our wonder, Christ has been made known among us to be the Son of the living God; Christ became a human being in the last times by the Virgin Mary of the seed of David and Abraham, according to the announcements previously made by the prophets concerning Him and through Him. Therefore, we implore and entreat that by your wisdom, our friend Maris, bishop of our native Neapolis, Eulogius and Sobelus will be sent to us so that we should not be destitute of such

as preside over the divine work. As Moses said: "16. May the Lord, the God of the spirits of all mankind appoint a man over this community 17. To go out and come in before them, one who will lead them out and bring them in, so the Lord’s people will not be like sheep without shepherd." (3)

Chapter 2: Youth may be allied with piety and discretion

Maria tells Ignatius that he has not any apprehension for those who have been named *young men*. Maria wants Ignatius to know that these young men are wise above the flesh and insensible to its passions; they glow with all the glory of a hoary head through their own intrinsic merits, although only recently they have been called to priesthood as young men. Maria calls Ignatius to remember his thoughts through the Spirit that God has given him by Christ. As such should be remembered Samuel who while yet a little child, was called a seer and was reckoned in the company of the prophets. Samuel reproved the aged Eli for transgression since he had honoured his infatuated sons above God, the author of all things and had allowed them to go unpunished, when they turned the office of the priesthood into ridicule and acted violently towards the people.

Chapter 3: Examples of youthful devotedness

When he was young, the wise Daniel passed judgement on certain vigorous old men, showing them that they were abandoned wretches and not respectable seniors, worthy of recognition. Daniel also proved that these people were of Jewish provenience but they were practically Canaanites. When as a young man, Jeremiah declined the office of prophet, entrusted to him by God, the Lord told him: "Do not say "I am only a child". You must go to everyone I send you and say whatever I command you."" (4) The wisdom of Solomon was revealed by his decision in the conflict of two women who lived together and gave birth to two children at a very short time one after the other. One of these children died shortly after his birth and his mother claimed that the remaining child is hers. (5) The queen of Sheba had heard about the fame of Solomon in relation to name of the Lord and came to test him with difficult questions. (6)

Chapter 4: The same subject continued

When he could yet scarcely speak articulately, Josiah, beloved of God, convicts those who were possessed by a wicked spirit as being false in their speech and deceivers of the people. Josiah also reveals the deceit of the demons and openly exposes those that are not gods. In his childhood, he slayed the priests of the daemons, overturned their altars and defiled the places in which sacrifices were offered with cadavers. He threw down the temples, cut down the groves, broke the pillars and opened the tombs of the ungodly so that no relic of the wicked should continue to exist. (7) It was to this extent that Josiah displayed zeal for the cause of godliness and he proved himself a punisher of the ungodly, while he yet faltered in speech like a child. David was also at once prophet and king, the root of our Saviour, according to the flesh, while he was yet a youth when he was anointed by Samuel to be king. (8)

Chapter 5: Expressions of respect for Ignatius

Time would not allow the enumeration of all those who had been pleased in their youth, having been entrusted by God the prophetical, priestly or kingly office. Those mentioned may be sufficient to bring the subject to the memory of the audience. The author entreats the audience not to consider her presumptuous or ostentatious because the statements were made not in order to instruct the crowd but simply in order to suggest the memory of the Father in God. The author declares the knowledge of her place, without comparison with the members of the crowd. The author salutes the holy clergy and the Christ - loving people.

Notes

1. The Epistle of Maria the proselyte to Ignatius in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 483 ff.
2. Castabala is a city in the Cilicia area, known also as Hieropolis. [AT]
3. Numeri 27:16 - 17
4. Jeremiah 1:7
5. 1 Kings 3:16 - 18 [AT]
6. 1 Kings 10 [AT]
7. 2 Kings 22, 23
8. 1 Samuel 16

The Epistle of Ignatius to Mary at Neapolis, near Zarbus (1)

Introduction

Ignatius, also called Theophorus, to her who obtained mercy through the grace of the most high God the Father and Jesus Christ the Lord, who died for us, to Mary (the daughter of Ignatius), most faithful, worthy of God and bearing Christ in her heart, wishes abundance of happiness in God.

Chapter 1: Acknowledgment of her excellence and wisdom

As one of the senses, sight is better than writing by communicating proofs of friendship. Sight honours the proofs of friendship and enriches the desire for better things. The second harbour of refuge is the practice of writing which we have received from a considerable distance as a convenient haven by your faith. By means of a letter, we have learned the excellence dwelling in you. The souls of the good and wisest women resemble to fountains of the purest water for they allure by their beauty passers - by to drink of them, even if they are not thirsty. Your intelligence invites us, as a word or command, to participate to those divine draughts which gush forth so abundantly in your soul.

Chapter 2: His own condition

The author asserts that he is no longer his own master but is driven along by the various wills of numerous adversaries, being in exile, in prison and in bounds. Nevertheless, the author pays no attention to these things. By the injuries they inflicted, the author claims that he acquires all the more the character of a disciple that may attain to Jesus Christ. The author may enjoy the torments prepared for him: "I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us." (2)

Chapter 3: He had complied with her request

The author maintains that he has gladly acted as requested in the letter of Mary, his daughter. The author has no doubt in respecting the persons proven worth by his daughter because he is sure that his daughter testifies about them by a Godly judgement and not through the influence of carnal favour. Ignatius is delighted by the numerous citations of the Scripture made by his daughter. When he read these quotations, the author had no longer a single doubtful thought concerning the matter. The author did not hold that these things were simply to be glanced over by his eyes. From these things, Ignatius has received from his daughter an incontrovertible demonstration. Ignatius wishes to be instead of her soul, because she loves Jesus, the Son of the living God. Therefore, Ignatius also says to his audience: "I love those who love me and those who seek me find me." (3)

Chapter 4: Commendation and exhortation

The author mentions now that the report he had heard about his daughter is true, while she was in Rome with the blesse Pope Linus, succeeded now by the deservedly blessed Clement, a hearer of Peter and Paul. During this time Mary, the daughter of Ignatius, added consistently to her own reputation and may further

increase it. Ignatius greatly desired to come to his daughter so that he may have rest with her but "... it is not for man to direct his steps." (4) The military guard under which Ignatius is kept, hinders his purpose and does not allow him to go further. In the current situation, the author cannot do or suffer anything. Therefore, deeming the practice of writing the second resource of friends for their mutual encouragement, the author salutes the sacred soul of Mary at Neapolis and wishes her to add still further to her vigour. Our present work is only reduced while the reward expected is great.

Chapter 5: Salutations and good wishes

Avoid those who deny the passion of Christ and His birth according to the flesh. Currently, there are many who suffer under this disease. It would be absurd to admonish you on other points, seeing that you are perfect in every good work and word; you are also able to exhort others in Christ. Salute all that are like - minded with yourself and who hold fast to their salvation in Christ. The presbyters and deacons and, above all, the holy Hero salute you. Cassian and his wife, the sister if Ignatius, as well as their children, salute the crowd. The author wishes his daughter to be sanctified for evermore in the enjoyment of health of the body and spirit, praying to see her in Christ, obtaining the crown.

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to Mary at Neapolis near Zarbus in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 487 ff.
2. Romans 8:18
3. Proverbs 8:17
4. Jeremiah 10:23

The Epistle of Ignatius to St. John the Apostle (1)

Ignatius and the brethren who are with to John the presbyter

The audience is deeply grieved by St. John's delay of his addresses and consolation. If his absence will continue, many will be disappointed. The people believe it is expedient for St. John to come. There are also many women who desire to see the mother Mary of Jesus and wish day by day to run off from the audience so that may you meet with her, to touch those breasts of her which nourished the Lord Jesus and may inquire about some rather secret matters. Salome, who stayed with her for five months at Jerusalem as well as other known persons, relate that she is full of all graces and all virtues, after the manner of a virgin, fruitful in virtue and grace. As they report, Mary is cheerful in persecutions and afflictions, free from murmuring in midst of penury and want, grateful to those that injure her and rejoicing when she is exposed to troubles: she sympathizes with the wretched and afflicted, sharing in their affliction and is not slow to help. Moreover, she shines forth gloriously as contending in the light of faith against the pernicious of vicious principles and conduct. She is the lady of our new religion and the handmaid among the faithful of all works of piety. She is indeed devoted to the humble and humbles herself more devotedly than the devoted and is wonderfully magnified by all while at the same time she suffers detraction from the Scribes and the Pharisees. Many also relate to us numerous other things about her but we do not so far as to believe all in every detail. As we are told by those who are worthy of credit, in Mary the mother of Jesus, there is an angelic purity of nature allied to human nature. Similar reports have excited human emotions and urge the humans to desire to see this heavenly prodigy and most sacred marvel. You comply in haste with our desire.

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to St. John the Apostle in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 492 ff.

A Second Epistle of Ignatius to St. John (1)

Ignatius is the friend of John the holy presbyter.

Ignatius says to St. John that if he will give him leave, He desires to go to Jerusalem to see the faithful saints and especially Maty the mother, considered an object of admiration and affection to all. Who would not rejoice to behold and address her who bore the true God, provided that Her is a friend of our faith and religion? Similarly, the author desires to see the venerable James (surnamed *the Just*) who is described as resembling Jesus Christ in appearance, in life and behaviour, as if they were twin brothers. They say that if Ignatius sees James, he sees also Jesus Christ Himself, including all the features of His body. Ignatius desires to see all the other saints, both male and female. Ignatius desires to hasten the fulfilment of his desire.

Notes

1. A Second Epistle of Ignatius to St. John in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 492 ff.

The Epistle of Ignatius to the Virgin Mary (1)

The author asserts that the Virgin Mary had to comfort and console him since he is a neophyte and a disciple of her beloved John. Ignatius had heard wonderful things about Jesus, the Son of Mary, and he deeply desires to know these things from Virgin Mary, who was always intimate and allied with Him, being acquainted with all His secrets. Ignatius wishes that Virgin Mary will let the neophytes who are with him to be comforted of Mary, by Mary and in Mary.

Reply of the blessed Virgin to this letter

The lowly handmaid of Jesus Christ to Ignatius, her beloved fellow - disciple

The things which you have heard and learned from John concerning Jesus are true. Believe them, cling to them and hold fast the profession of that Christianity which you have embraced; you should conform your habits and life to your profession. The Virgin Mary promises to visit Ignatius and those who are with him together with John. Virgin Mary urges Ignatius to stand fast in the faith (2) and show himself a man. Ignatius should not let the fierceness of persecution to move him; Ignatius id urged to let his spirit to be strong and rejoice in God, the Saviour. (3)

Notes

1. The Epistle of Ignatius to the Virgin Mary in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 493 ff.
2. 1 Corinthians 16:13
3. Luke 1:47

The Martyrdom of Ignatius (1)

Chapter 1: Desire of Ignatius for martyrdom

Shortly after Trajan succeeded as Roman emperor (i.e. 98 AD [AT]), Ignatius was governing with great care the church of the Antiochians. Ignatius was a disciple of John the Apostle and, with all respect, an apostolic character. Ignatius escaped difficultly the numerous persecutions of Domitian. Like a good pilot, by the helm of prayer and fasting, by the earnestness of his teaching and by the constant spiritual labour, Ignatius resisted the flood which rolled against him, fearing only the loss of those who were deficient in courage or able to suffer from their simplicity. Wherefore, Ignatius rejoiced over the tranquil state of the church. When the persecution ceased for a short time, Ignatius was grieved for himself because he did not attain yet a true love to Christ nor reached the perfect rank of disciple. Inwardly, Ignatius reflected that the confession made by martyrdom would bring him to a more intimate relation to the Lord. Ignatius continued with the church and, like a divine lamp and enlightened every one’s understanding by his expositions of the Holy Scriptures. Thus, Ignatius attained the object of his desire.

Chapter 2: Ignatius is condemned by Trajan

In the nineth year of his reign (i.e. 107 AD [AT]), Trajan was elevated with pride, after his victory over the Scythians, the Dacians and other nations. He thought that the Christians were yet wanting to complete their universal subjugation. Therefore, he threatened to persecute them, unless they agreed to worship the daemons like all the other nations. Thus, Trajan compelled all those who were living godly lives either to sacrifice to idols or die. Ignatius, the noble

soldier of Christ, feared for the church of the Antiochians. According to his own will, Ignatius was brought before Trajan, who was in Antioch at that time but was in haste against Armenia and the Parthians. When Ignatius was brought before him, The emperor Trajan said to him: "Who are you wicked wretch to allow yourself to transgress our commands and persuade others to do the same so they should miserably perish?" Ignatius replied: "No one ought to call Theophorus wicked for all evil spirits have departed from the servants of God. But, because I am an enemy of these spirits, you call me wicked in respect to them. I quite agree with you." Trajan answered: "And who is Theophorus?" Ignatius replied: "He who has Christ within his breast." Trajan said: Do we not seem to you to have the gods in our minds whose assistance we enjoy in fighting against our enemies?" Ignatius answered: "You are wrong when you call the daemons of the peoples as gods. For there is but one God, who made heavens and earth and the sea and all that we are in them and one Jesus Christ, the only - begotten Son of God, whose kingdom I may enjoy." Trajan said: "Do you mean him who was crucified under Pontious Pilate?" Ignatius replied: "I mean Him who crucified my sin, with him who was the inventor of it and who was condemned and cast down all the deceit and malice of the devil under the feet of those who carry Him in their heart." Trajan said: "Then do you carry within yourself the one who was crucified?" Ignatius replied: "Truly so for it is written: "I will live in them and walk among them and I will be their God and they will be my people"" (2) Then Trajan pronounced the sentence as follows: "We command that Ignatius, who affirms that he carries about within him Christ who was crucified, be bound by soldiers, carried to the great city of Rome. There he should be devoured by the beasts, for the gratification of the people." When the holy martyr heard this sentence, he cried out with joy: "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast vouchsafed to honour me with a perfect love towards Thee and hast me to be bound with iron chains like the Apostle Paul." Having spoken thus, he then with delight, clasped the chains about him. When he had first prayed for the church, he commanded it with tears to the Lord, he was hurried away by the savage cruelty of the soldiers that he might be carried to Rome, there to furnish food to the bloodthirsty beasts.

Chapter 3: Ignatius sails to Smyrna

Wherefore, with great alacrity and joy, through his desire to suffer, Ignatius came from Antioch to Seleucia, from where he set sail. After much suffering, Ignatius came to Smyrna, when he disembarked with great joy and hastened to see the hastened to see holy Polycarp, now bishop of Smyrna. In the past, both had been disciples of St. John. Ignatius met with Polycarp and communicated him some spiritual gifts, requesting him to labour together for the fulfilment of his desire. Ignatius asked this from all the churches in Asia. Polycarp as well as the cities and churches of Asia welcomed the holy man through their bishops, presbyters and deacons, all of whom were willing to meet him, if they might receive from him by any means some spiritual gift.

Chapter 4: Ignatius writes to the churches

Ignatius's love for Christ was testified and extended by his speeches, as far as he was to secure heaven through his good confession and the earnestness of those who joined their prayers to his own concerning the approaching conflict. Ignatius also desired to recompense the churches, who came to meet him, through their rulers, by sending them letters of thanksgiving, which emanated spiritual grace, along with prayer and exhortation. Taking notice of all men so kindly affected towards him and fearing lest the love of motherhood would prevent him from hastening the Lord while a fair door of suffering martyrdom was opened to him, he wrote to the churches of the Romans the *Epistle to the Romans*. (3)

Chapter 5: Ignatius is brought to Rome

By means of this epistle, Ignatius corrected the brethren of Rome who were not willing his martyrdom. Ignatius began the sail from Smyrna because Christophorus was under the pressure of soldiers to hasten to the public spectacles in the mighty Rome. Being given up to the wild beasts in the sight of the Roman people, he might attain to the crown for which he strove, Ignatius landed at Troas. Ignatius was eager to disembark when Puteoli came into sight, desiring to trend in the footsteps of Apostle Paul. (4) The strong storms encountered on the way were according to Ignatius' wishes, since he was in haste to leave the world as soon as possible in order to attain to the Lord whom he loved. The Roman soldiers became annoyed by the slowness of the ship but the bishop rejoicingly yielded to their urgency.

Chapter 6: Ignatius is devoured by the beasts at Rome

They advanced from Portus. The fame of all relating to the holy martyr was already spread abroad. We met the brethren full of fear and joy. They were rejoicing because they were considered worthy to meet with Theophorus but were struck with fear because such an eminent person was led to death. Ignatius asked silence from some people who, in their fervent zeal, were saying that they would appease the people so that they should not demand his destruction. Ignatius was immediately aware of this through the Spirit. He saluted them all and begged them to show a true affection for him, more than he did in the *Epistle to the Romans* and persuaded them not envy him for hastening to the Lord. Ignatius was led by the soldiers with all haste into the amphitheater, after he and all the brethren kneeled beside him and entreated the Son of God in behalf of the Churches that the persecution should be ceased and mutual love might continue among the brothers. Then, Ignatius was immediately thrown in, according to the command of Caesar given some time before. Ignatius was thrown in to the wild beasts on the solemn thirteen day, on which the people were accustomed to assemble in more than ordinary numbers. Thus, Ignatius was thrown to the wild beasts near the temple. The desire of the martyr was to be fulfilled by means of the wild beasts according to the principle that "…what the righteous desire will be granted." (5)
The result was that Ignatius was not troublesome to any of the brethren by the gathering of his remains. Only the harder portions of holy remains were conveyed to Antioch and were deposited in linen as an inestimable treasure left to the holy church by the grace of which he was a martyr.

Chapter 7: Ignatius appears in a vision after his death

All that took place when Sura and Senecio were consuls for the second time. The authors of the present epistle were eye - witnesses to the events described here. They have entreated the Lord with blended knees and much prayer that He would give the weak men full assurance concerning the things done. When the authors of the present document were falling into a brief slumber, it came to pass that some blessed Ignatius suddenly standing by and embracing them while others saw him still dropping with sweat as if he had just returned from his great labour and was standing by the Lord. Therefore, when they saw these things with great joy and compared together their visions, they sang praise to God, the bestower of all good things and expressed their understanding to the happiness of the holy martyr. As now they know the day and time when these things happened, they may have fellowship with the champion and noble martyr of Christ, who shuttered the devil and perfected the course which, out of love, he had designed in Jesus. By Ignatius and with Ignatius, glory and power should be for evermore to the Father with the Holy Spirit.

Notes

1.Martyrdom of Ignatius in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 287 ff
2. 2 Corinthians 6:16
3. Epistle of Ignatius to the Romans in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 73 ff
4. Cf. Acts 28:13 - 14 [AT]
5. Proverbs 10:24

The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus (1)

Ch. 1: Occasion of the Epistle

Diognetus is exceedingly anxious to understand the religion of the Christians. For this purpose, Diognetus makes distinct and careful inquiries about the God trusted by the Christians and how they worship Him. Diognetus also inquires the disregard of the Christians for the world and the despisal of death. The Christians do not take into account the Greek divinities, do not observe the superstition of the Jews and have a particular reciprocal affection among themselves. This interest is a new phenomenon for humans. Mathetes asks from God to allow him to speak so that will become improved after he was heard.

Chapter 2: The Vanity of Idols

Mathetes calls Diognetus to free himself from all the prejudices which possess his mind and to put aside as deceivable what he has been accustomed with. Diognetus should abandon the habit which led him astray and become capable to listen to a new narrative. Diognetus should consider reality with his eyes and intellect. The question to be considered is the substance and form from which are made the idols.

The idols are made of stone, bronze, wood, silver and iron. These materials are no better than those supplied for the most dishonourable service. The idols made of perishable material and could be shaped by several artificers. The objects worshipped by humans could be formed by human hands. These objects are deaf and blind, soulless, senseless and motionless. These objects rot and decay. The idolaters are slaves to the objects they call gods; they worship their objects and finally become like them. The idolaters hate the Christians because they do not consider that the idols are divine. The idolaters despise the idols made of stone and earthenware while the idols made of gold and silver are shut and protected by night, in order to prevent their theft. If the idols are sensible, the honours offered to them is a punishment; if the idols are insensible, the honours offered to them are only an insult for them, as they are appropriate with the blood and fat of victims. Much more could be said about the Christians who are not enslaved to such idols.

Chapter 3: Superstitions of the Jews

Mathetes believes that the readers are mainly anxious to hear that they do not practise religion as the Jews. So far as they abstain from the worship of idolatry, the Jews are right claiming reverence to unique God of the universe and considering Him the Master. The Jews are wrong as far as they worship God in modalities similar to those of the idolaters.

The Greeks display their stupidity by the worship of senseless and dead images. This practice ought to be considered folly and non - religious. God, the creator of the universe does not need the offerings offered by the idolaters.

For Mathetes, those who perform sacrifices to God with blood, fat and whole burnt offerings appear to be identical to those who show the same respect towards deaf images. Some think fit to make offerings to objects unable to participate in the

honour; the other class thinks fit to make offerings to God, who does not need anything.

Chapter 4: The other observances of the Jews

The rules of the Jews concerning meats, the superstition relating to Sabbath, the vanity of circumcision, the dissimulation of their fasting and new moon is ridiculous and unworthy of any consideration. Is it not impious to receive some of the things created by God and to decline others as useless and superfluous? Is it not profane to lie against God as if He forbade to do anything good on Sabbath? Is it not ridiculous to vaunt the mutilation of the flesh as a token of election, as if for this reason the Jews were particularly beloved by God? The Jews watch the stars and the moon, keep observance of months and days according to their own impulses, make some of them festivals and others times of mourning Who would regard this as an exhibition of godliness and not much more folly?

Therefore, the Christians are right in holding aloof from the common silliness and error of the Jews. Christians should not expect to be instructed by men about Judaism.

Chapter 5: The manners of the Christians

The Christians are not distinguished from the rest of mankind in terms of location, speech or customs. The Christians do not live in cities of their own, do not have a different language and do not possess any invention or study of ingenious men and they are not the masters of any human dogma. The Christians live in the cities of Greeks and barbarians but follow the customs of natives in the arrangements of life. Yet, they promote their own citizenship and this confessedly contradicts expectation. The Christians dwell in their own countries but only as sojourners. They accept the share of citizens and endure all difficulties as strangers. For them, every foreign country is a fatherland and every fatherland is foreign.

The Christians marry like the others and do not cast off their children. They have common meals and respect monogamy. They find themselves in the flesh but do not live by the flesh. Their existence is on earth but their citizenship is in heaven. They obey the established law and surpass the laws in their own live by their extensive morality. The Christians love all men and are persecuted by them.

Mathetes claims that the Christians are in many difficult situations but believes that the Christians are in the opposite and ideal state of affairs. The Christians live in poverty, are dishonoured, evil spoken and insulted. Yet, the Christians live in abundance, they are glorified in their dishonour, they are vindicated for the evil spoken about them, they bless and respect the others, they rejoice their punishment and thereby are quickened by life. The Jews are at war against the Christians as mortals. Those who hate the Christians cannot tell the reason of their hostility. (2)

Chapter 6: The relations of the Christians to the world

The Christians in the world are similar to the soul in the body. As the soul is spread in all the members of the body, the Christians are spread in all places. The

soul which resides in the body has a different provenience than the body. Similarly, the Christians from the world have a different provenience than the world. (3)

The soul is invisible but is guarded in the visible body. Similarly, the Christians are recognized to be in the world but their religion remains invisible. The flesh hates the soul and is at war with it because pleasures are not indulged. Similarly, the world hates the Christians because they placed themselves against pleasures. Nevertheless, the world did not receive anything wrong from the Christians.

The soul loves the flesh but the flesh hates the soul. The Christians love those who hate them. The soul is enclosed in the body but holds together the body. Similarly, the Christians are kept in the world as in a prison.

The immortal soul dwells in a mortal tabernacle; similarly, the Christians sojourn amidst perishable things while they look for the imperishable heavens. The soul improves itself when it is ill - provided with food and drinks. Similarly, the number of Christian increases as they are daily punished. God appointed the Christians to such a great mission and it is unlawful for them to decline this mission.

Chapter 7: The manifestations of Christ

The manifestation of Christ was not a mere earthly invention delivered to the Christians; it was not a human system of opinion which they considered right to preserve so carefully. It was not a dispensation of mere human mysteries committed to them. The Almighty God, the invisible Creator of the universe, ha sent Christ from heaven and placed Him among humans. Christ is the truth, the holly and the incomprehensible Word. God established Christ in the hearts of humans. Unlike they may have imagined, God did not send to the humans any servant, angel, ruler or anyone entrusted in heaven with the government of things. God sent to the humans the universal Creator and Fashioner under the influence of clemency and meekness. God sent His Son to the humans as Saviour, loving human beings and not judging them. As some humans are punished, the number of believers increases. This is the power of God, not of humans.

Chapter 8: The miserable state of man before the coming of the Word

Before Christ came, for what purpose man had any knowledge of what is God? Should we accept
the worthless doctrines of those deemed to be trustworthy philosophers? The theories which sustain that God is fire, water or some other created element, may lead to the opinion that some of the created elements may be declared as God. Such declarations are the starling and erroneous utterances of deceivers. No man has either seen Him or made Him known; God revealed Himself by faith, the only modality given to see God, the Creator and Master of the universe. When God revealed His scheme through His beloved Son and manifested the purpose which He had prepared from the beginnings, He gave us all His gifts at once, including the participation in His benefits and understanding the mysteries which no human would have expected.

Chapter 9: Why the Son was sent so late?

Before Jesus Christ (4), God allowed humans to be borne along by unruly impulses, being drawn away by the desire of pleasure and lusts. God tolerated the human sins. In the same time, God sought to form a mind conscious of righteousness which should be vouchsafed to humans. It became clear that humans were unable to enter into the Kingdom of God but could be enabled for this purpose by the power of God. When human wickedness reached its height, it was clearly shown humans were sanctioned for that by punishment and death. When God decided to show His own kindness and power, His beloved Son did not consider humans with hatred and did not thrust humans away but displayed great long - suffering. God gave His Soon as ransom for humans the immortal for the mortals. His righteousness was the only thing capable to cover human sins. Only the Son of God could justify the wicked and ungodly humans. God convinced the humans that human nature is unable to attain to life and the Saviour is able to save even things which were unsavable previously. Thus, God desired to lead humans to trust His kindness and esteem Him as Nourisher, Father, Teacher, Counsellor, Healer, our Wisdom, Light, Honour, Glory, Power and Life. God also desired that we should not be anxious about clothing and food. (5)

Chapter 10: The blessings that will follow from faith

The desire to have Christian faith is firstly precedented by the complete knowledge of God, the Father. God loved mankind, created the world for it and beneficiated it with reason and understanding. God imparted only with humans the privilege of looking upwards to Himself. God created humanity after His own image and sent it to His only - begotten Son, to whom He promised a kingdom in heaven which was destined to be given to those who loved Him. When humans will attain this knowledge, with what joy will you be filled? How will love Him who first so loved you. If he is willing, the human can become an imitator of God and His kindness. Happiness is not to be found in ruling over the neighbour, in being rich or showing violence toward the inferiors. By these means, nobody can become an imitator of God. These means do not constitute His majesty. The imitator of God is the one who takes upon himself the burden of his neighbour. The one who may be superior in whatever respect is ready to benefit someone who is deficient. The imitator of God is the one who, whatsoever things he has received from God, shares them to the peaceful and becomes a divinity and imitator of God for those who received his benefits. "Then, thou shalt see, while still on earth, that God in the heavens rules over the universe; then thou shalt begin to speak the mysteries of God; then thou shalt both love and admire those who suffer punishment because they will not deny God; then shalt thou condemn the deceit and error of the world when thou shalt know what it is to live truly in heavens; when thou shalt despise that which is here esteemed to be death which is reserved for those who shall be condemned to the eternal fire, which shall afflict those even to the end that are committed to it. Then, shalt thou admire those who, for the sake of righteousness, endure the fire that is but a moment and shalt count them happy when thou shalt know the nature of that fire." (6)

Chapter 11: The things are worthy to be known and believed

Mathetes claims that he does not speak about things strange to him and does not aim at anything inconsistent with the right reason. As a disciple of the

Apostles, the author became a teacher of the gentiles. He declares that he ministers to the disciple worthy of the truth the things delivered to him. The person rightly educated and begotten by the loving Word would aspire to learn accurately what has been clearly shown down by the Word to His disciples. The Word was not understood by the unbelieving but was conversed with the disciples. Who is rightly taught and begotten by the loving Word will seek to learn accurately the things which have been clearly shown by the Word to His disciples. The Word is not understood by the unbelieving but is conversing with the disciples who are estimated as faithful to Him and acquire a knowledge of the mysteries of the Father. He sent the Word which may manifest Him to the world. When preached by the Apostles, the Gentiles believed in Him. He is the eternal God from the beginnings, who appeared as new, was found old and yet who is ever born afresh in the hearts of the saints. He is Jesus from eternity, who is named today the Son. By the Son, the Church is enriched and the widely spread grace increases in the saints, furnishing understanding, revealing mysteries, announcing times, rejoicing over the faithful, giving to those that seek, by whom the limits of faith are not broken through and boundaries established by the Fathers are not passed over. "Then the fear of the law is chanted, the grace of the prophets is known, the faith of the Gospels is established, the tradition of the Apostles is preserved and the grace of the Church exults. If you grieve not, you shall know those things which the Word teaches, by whom He wills and when He pleases. Whatever things we are moved to utter by the will of the Word commanding us, we communicate to you with pains and from a love of things which have been revealed to us." (7)

Chapter 12: The importance of the knowledge to true spiritual life

Who read and carefully listened to the above shall know what God bestows on such as rightly love Him, being made a paradise of delight, presenting within themselves a tree bearing all kinds of produces and flourishing well, being adorned with various fruits. The tree of knowledge and the tree of life have been planted in this place, Paradise. It is not the tree of knowledge that destroys but disobedience proves to be destructive. The significant written words which describe how God planted from the beginning the tree of life in the midst of Paradise reveal through knowledge the way to life. When the first created did not use knowledge properly, they were stripped naked through the fraud of the serpent. Life cannot exist without knowledge and knowledge is not secure without life Therefore, both are planted close together. The Apostle perceived the force of this conjunction and blamed that knowledge without true doctrine is admitted to influence life declares "Knowledge puffs up but love builds up." (8) "He who knows anything without true knowledge and such as it witnessed to by life, knows nothing but is deceived by the serpent as not loving life. But he, who combines knowledge with fear and seeks after life, plants in hope, looking for fruit. Let your heart be your wisdom, let your life be true knowledge inwardly received. Bearing this tree and displaying its fruit, thou shalt gather in those things which are desired by God, which the serpent cannot reach and to which deception does not approach; nor is Eve then corrupted but is trusted as a virgin; the salvation is manifested and the Apostles are filled with understanding and the Passover of the Lord advances and the choirs are gathered together and are arranged in proper order and the world rejoices in teaching the Saints, by whom the Father is glorified: to whom be the glory forever. Amen." (9)

Notes

1. *The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 299 ff. Diognetus and Mathetes are anonymous names proceeded only for the argument.
2. Cf. 2 Corinthians 10:3; 2 Corinthians 6: 9 - 10; 2 Corinthians 4:12; Philippians 3:20
3. John 17: 11, 14, 16
4. See: Romans 3:21 - 26; Galatians 4:4
5. Cf. Matthew 6:25
6. *The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus* in *op. cit.*, p. 314
7. Ibid., p. 315
8. 1 Corinthians 8:1
9. *The Epistle of Mathetes to Diognetus* in *op. cit.*, p. 316

The Pastor of Hermas (1)

Book I - Visions

Vision First - Against the filthy and proud thoughts and carelessness of Hermas in chastising his sons

Chapter 1

The person who had brought up Hermas sold him to Rhode in Rome. Many years later, Hermas recognized Rhode and began to love her as a sister. After some time, Hermas saw her bathe in the Tiber. Hermas gave her his hand and drew her of the river. Her moving beauty made him think that he would be happy to get a wife as handsome and good as she is. This was the only thought which passed in his mind.

Shortly afterwards, as Hermas was walking on his road to the villages, magnifying the creation of God, thinking how magnificent, beautiful and powerful they are, Hermas fell asleep. The Spirit carried him away and through a pathless place, through which a human being could not travel because it was placed in the midst of rocks; it was rugged and impassible due to the water. After he passed the river, Hermas came to a plain. He bent down on his knees, began to pray and to confess his sins. As he prayed, the heavens were opened and he saw the woman whom he desired, saluting him from the sky. Looking up to her, Hermas said: "Lady, what do you do here?". She answered: "I have been taken up here to accuse you of your sins before the Lord." Hermas said: "Lady, are you to be the subject of my accusation?" She said: "No, but hear the words which I am going to speak to you. God, who dwells in the heavens, created out of nothing the things which exist, who multiplied them and increased them on account of His holy church, is angry with you for having sinned against me." Hermas answered her: "Lady, have I sinned against you? Did I not always think of you as a lady? Did I not always respect you as a sister? Why do you falsely accuse me of this wickedness and impurity? Did I nor always respect you as a sister? Why do you falsely accuse me of this wickedness and impurity?" With a smile, she replied: "The desire of wickedness arose within your heart. Is it not your opinion that a righteous man commits sin when an evil desire arises in his heart? There is sin in such a case and the sin is great, for the thoughts of a righteous man should be righteous. By thinking righteously, his character is established in the heavens (or his glory is made straight in the heavens) and he has the Lord merciful to him in every matter. But those who entertain wicked thoughts in their minds are bringing upon themselves death and captivity. This is especially the case with those who set their affections in this world and glory in their riches and do not look forward to the blessings of the world to come. Their regrets will be numerous for they have no hope but have despaired of themselves and their life. You should pray to God and God will heal your sins as well as the sins of your house and of all the saints."

Chapter 2

After she had spoken these words, the heavens were shut. Hermas was overwhelmed with sorrow and fear and said to himself: "If this sin is assigned to me, how can I be saved or how shall I propitiate God in regard to my sins, which are of the grossest character? With what words shall I ask the Lord to be merciful to me? With what words shall I ask the Lord to be merciful to me? While I was thinking over these things, discussing them in my mind, I saw opposite to me a great white chair, made of white wood. Then came up an old woman, arrayed in a splendid robe, holding a book in her hand. She sat alone and saluted me. In sadness and tears I said to her: "Lady, hail!" She said to me: "Why are you down cat, Hermas? You were wont to be patient and temperate and always smiling. Why are you so gloomy and not cheerful?" I answered her and said: "Oh Lady, I have been reproached by a very good woman who says that I sinned against her." And she said: "Far be such a deed from a servant of God. But perhaps a desire after her has arisen within your heart. In the case of the servants of God, such a wish produces sin. For it is a wicked and horrible wish in an all - chaste and already well - tried spirit to desire an evil deed and to do so, especially for Hermas, who keeps himself from all wicked desire; Hermas is full of all simplicity and he is of great artfulness."

Chapter 3

"But God is not angry with on account of this but that you may convert your house, which have committed iniquity against the Lord and against you, their parents. Although you your sons, yet you did not warn your house but permitted them to be terribly corrupted. On this account, the Lord is angry with you but He will heal all the evils which have been done in your house. Due to their sins and iniquities, you have been destroyed by the affairs of this world. Now the mercy of the Lord has taken pity on you and your house and will strengthen you and establish you in His glory. Only be not easy - minded but be of good courage and comfort your house. As a smith hammers out his works and accomplishes whatever he wishes, so shall righteous daily speech overcome all iniquity. Therefore, cease not to admonish your sons for I know that if they will repent with all their heart, they will be included in the Books of Life with the saints." Having said these words, she said to Hermas: "Do you wish to hear me read?" Hermas answered: "Lady, I do." She said: "Listen then and give ear to the glories of God." Then Hermas heard from her, magnificently and admiringly, things which his memory could not retain because all the words were terrible and unendurable by a human being. However, Hermas remembered the last words because they were useful to humans and gentle.

Vision second - Again, of his neglect in chastising hid talkative wife, his lustful sons and of his character

Chapter 1

As Hermas was going to the villages in the country about the same time as the previous year, he recalled the memory of that year. Again, the Spirit carried

Hermas away and took him to the same place where he had been in the previous year. As he came to this place, Hermas bowed his knees and began to pray to the Lord to glorify His name because God considered him worthy and made known to him his former sins. On rising from prayer, Hermas saw in front of him the old woman who had seen in the previous year, as she was walking and was reading a book. She told Hermas: "Can you carry a report of these things to the elect of God?" Hermas answered her: "Lady, so much I cannot retain in my memory but give the book and I shall transcribe it." She said: "Take it and you will give it back to me." Thereupon, Hermas took the book. He went away into a certain part of the country and transcribed letter by letter the whole book. However, Hermas did not catch the syllables of the book. Soon after Hermas finished to write the book, it was suddenly snatched from his hands, although he did not see the person who did it.

Chapter 2

Fifteen days later, after Herma shad fasted and prayed to the Lord, the knowledge of the writing was revealed to him. "Your seed, O Hermas, has sinned against God and they have blasphemed against the Lord and in their great wickedness they have betrayed their parents. They passed as traitors of their parents; by their treachery, they did not reap profit. Even now they have added to their sins, lusts and iniquitous pollutions and thus their iniquities have been filled up But make known these words to all your children and to your wife, who is to be your sister. Your wife does not restrain her tongue, with which she commits iniquity; on hearing these words, she will control herself and will obtain mercy. After you have made known to them these words which my Lord has commanded me to reveal to you, then they will be forgiven all the sins which they have committed in former times and forgiveness will be granted to all the saints who have sinned even to the present day, if they repent with all their heart and drive all doubts from their minds. For the Lord has sworn to His glory, in regard to His elect, that if any one of them sin after a certain day which has been fixed, we shall not be saved because the repentance of the righteous has limits. Filled up are the days of repentance to all saints but, for the heathen, repentance will be possible even to the last day. Therefore, you will tell those who preside over the Church to direct their ways in righteousness, that they may receive in full the promises with great glory. Therefore, you who work righteousness, stand steadfast and doubt not that your passage may be with the holy angels. Happy is he who endure the great tribulation on that is coming on and happy are they who shall not deny their own life. For the Lord has sworn by His Son that those who denied the Lord have abandoned their life in despair: even now they are to deny Him in the days that are coming. To those who denied in earlier times, God became gracious on account of His exceeding tender mercy."

Chapter 3

"As for you, Hermas, remember not the wrongs done to you by your children, nor neglect your sister, so that they may be cleansed from their sins. If you do not remember the wrongs they have done to you, they will be instructed with righteous instruction, for the remembrance of wrongs work death. Hermas, you have endured great personal tribulations on account of the transgressions of your house

because you did not attend to them but were careless and engaged in your wicked transactions. You are saved because you did not depart from the living God and on account of your simplicity and great self - control. These have saved you, if you remain steadfast. And they will save all who act in the same manner and walk in guilelessness and simplicity. Those who possess such virtues will wax strong against every form of wickedness and will abide unto eternal life. All those who practise righteousness are blessed for they shall never be destroyed. Now you will tell Maximus: Lo! Tribulation comes on. If this seems good to you, deny again. The Lord is near to them who return unto Him, as it is written in Elad and Medad, who prophesised to the people in the wilderness."

Chapter 4

While he slept, a revelation was given to Hermas by a young man of comely appearance who said to him: "Who do you think is the old woman from whom you received the book?" Hermas answered: "The Sybil." The young man said: "You are wrong; it is not Sybil." Hermas said: "Who is it then?" The young man answered: "It is the church." Hermas told him: "Why then is she an old woman?" The young man answered: "Because she was created first of all. On this account, she is old and for her sake the whole world was made." After that Hermas saw a vision of his house and that old woman came and asked him if he had given the book to the presbyters. Hermas answered that he did not. Then she said: "You have done well for I have some word to add. When I finish all the words, all the elect will then become acquainted with through you. Therefore, you will write two books and you will send the one to Clemens and the other to Grapte. Clemens will send his book to foreign countries, for he was granted permission to do so. Grapte will admonish the widows and the orphans. You will read the words in this city along with the presbyter who preside over the church."

Vision third - concerning the building of the triumphant Church and various classes of reprobate men

Chapter 1

The vision seen by Hermas was as follows: Hermas had fasted frequently and prayed to the Lord that the Lord would show him the revelation which the Lord promised to show through the old woman. That same night, the old woman appeared to Hermas and said to him: "Since you are so anxious and eager to know all things, go into the part of the country where you tarry; about the fifth hour, I shall appear unto you and show you all that you ought to see. Hermas asked her: "Lady, into what part of the country am I to go?" She said: "Into any part you wish." Accordingly, Hermas went to the country, counted the hours and reached the place he had promised to meet her. Hermas saw an ivory seat ready placed and a linen cushion on it, above which was spread a covering of fine linen. Seeing these laid out and yet no one in the place, Hermas began to fell awe; he was seized by trembling and horror came on him when he saw that he was all alone. But, on coming back to himself and calling to mind the glory of God, he took courage, bent his knees and again confessed his sins to God, as he had done before. Whereupon, the old woman approached, accompanied by six young men who Hermas saw before. She stood behind Hermas, listened to him as he prayed and confessed his

sins to the Lord. Touching him, the woman said: "Hermas, cease praying continually for your sins; pray for righteousness, that you may have a portion of it immediately in your house." On this, she took up Hermas by the hand and brought him to the seat and said to the young men: "Go and build." When the young men were gone and they were alone, she said to Hermas: "Sit here." Hermas said to her: "Lady, permit my elders to be seated first." She said: "Do what I bid you; sit down." When Hermas would have sat down on her right, she did not allow him but with her hand beckoned to him to sit down on the left. While Hermas was thinking about this, feeling vexed that she did let him sit on the right, she said: "Are you vexed, Hermas? The place to right is for others who have already pleased God and have suffered for his namesake. You still have much to accomplish before you can sit with them. Abide as you do now in your simplicity and you will seat with them and with all who do their deeds and bear what they have borne."

Chapter 2

Hermas said: "What have they borne?" She said: "Listen: scourges, prisons, great tribulations, crosses, wild beasts, for the sake of the name of God. On this account is assigned to them the division of sanctification on the right hand and to every one who shall suffer for the name of God; for the rest is assigned the division on the left, where are the same gifts and promises. Only those who sit on the right have some glory. You are eager to sit on the right with them but your shortcomings are numerous. You will be cleansed from your shortcomings and all those who are not given doubts shall be cleansed from all their iniquities up till this day." Saying this, she wished to go away but, falling down at her feet, Hermas begged her by the Lord that she would show him the vision which she promised him to show. The, once again, she took hold of Hermas by her hand and made him sit on the seat to the left. Lifting up o splendid rod, she told Hermas: "Do you see something great?" Hermas said: "Lady, I see nothing." She told Hermas: "Lo! You do not see opposite to you a great tower, built upon the waters, made of splendid square stones?" For the tower was built square by those six young men who had come with her. But myriads of men were carrying stones to it, some dragging them from the depths, others removing them from the land and handed them to these six young men. They were taking the stones and were building. They placed in the building the stones dragged out of the depths as they were because they were polished and fitted exactly into other stones and became so united one with the other that the lines of juncture would not be perceived. Thus, the building of the tower looked as if it was made out of one stone. However, the stones taken from the earth had a different fate: the young men rejected some of them and fitted some of them into the building. The young men cut down some of the stones and threw them away from the tower. However, many other stones lay around the tower and the young men did not use them in the building for some of them were rough and had cracks, some other stones were too short while other stones were white and round but did not fit into the building of the tower. Moreover, Hermas saw other stones thrown far away from the tower, falling on the public road but were rolled in a pathless place. Hermas says that he saw other stones falling into the fire and were burnt while other stones were falling close to the water but could not be rolled into the water.

Chapter 3

On showing these visions to Hermas, she wished to retire. Hermas told her: "What is the use of my having seen all this while I do not know what it means?" She said to Hermas: "You are a cunning fellow, wishing to know everything that relates to the tower." Hermas said: "Even so, O Lady, I may tell it to my brethren that, hearing this, they may know the Lord in much glory." She said: "Many indeed shall hear and hearing some shall be glad and some shall weep but even these, if they hear and repent, shall also rejoice. Hear, then, the parables of the tower for I will reveal all to you and give me no more trouble in regard to revelation for these revelations have an end, because they have been completed. But you will not cease praying for revelations because you are shameless. The tower which you see building is myself, the Church, who have appeared to you now and on the former occasion. Ask whatever you like in regard to the tower and I will reveal it to you, that you may rejoice with the saints." Hermas told her: "Lady, since you have vouchsafed to reveal all to me this once, reveal it." She said to Hermas: "Whatsoever ought to be revealed, will be revealed; only let your heart be with God and doubt not whatsoever you shall see." Hermas asked her: "Why was the tower built upon waters, O lady?" She answered: " I told you before and you still inquire carefully: therefore, inquiring you shall find the truth. Hear then why the tower is built upon the waters. It is because your life has been and will be saved through water. The tower was founded on the word of the almighty and glorious Name and it is kept together by the invisible power of the Lord."

Chapter 4

Hermas replies: "This is magnificent and marvellous but who are the six young men who are engaged in the building?" She said: "These are the holy angels of God who were first created and to whom the Lord handed over His whole creation that they may increase, build up and rule over the whole creation. By these, the building of the tower will be finished." Hermas asked: "But who are the other persons who are engaged in carrying the stones?" She said: "These are the holy angels of the Lord but the former six are more excellent than these. The building of the tower will be finished and all will rejoice together around the tower and will glorify God because the tower is finished." Hermas asked: "Lady, I would like to know what became of the stones and what was meant by the various kinds of stones?" She replied: "Not because you are more deserving than all others that this revelation should be made to you - for there are others before you and better than you, to whom these visions should have been revealed - but the name of God may be glorified, had the revelation been made to you and will be made on account of the doubtful who ponder in their hearts whether these things will be or not. Tell them that all these things are true and none of them is beyond the truth. All of them are firm and sure and established on a strong foundation. "

Chapter 5

"Hear now about the stones which are in the building. Those square white stones, which fitted exactly into each other, are apostles, bishops, teachers and deacons who have lived in godly purity and have acted as bishops, teachers and deacons chastely and reverently to the elect of God. Some of them have fallen asleep and some still remain alive. They have always agreed with each other, have

been at peace among themselves and listened to each other. On account of this, they join exactly into the building of the tower." Hermas remarked: "But who are the stones that were dragged from the depths, which were laid into the building and fitted in with the rest of the stones previously placed in the tower?" She answered: "They are those who suffered for Lord's sake." Hermas said: "But I wish to know, O Lay, who are the other stones which were carried from the land." She answered: "Those which go into the building without being polished are those whom God has approved of, for they walked in the straight ways of the Lord and practiced His commandments." Hermas asked: "But who are those who are young in faith and faithful but they are admonished by the angels to do good, for no iniquity was found in them? Who are those whom they rejected and cast away?" She answered: "Those are they who have sinned and wish to repent. On this account, they have not been thrown far from the tower because they will yet be useful in the building, if they repent. Then those who are to repent, if they do repent, will be strong in faith, if now they repent while the tower is building. For if the building will be finished, there will be more room for anyone but he will be rejected. However, this privilege will belong only to who has been placed now near the tower."

Chapter 6

"As to those who wee cut down and thrown far away from the tower, do you wish to know who they are? They are the sons of the inequity who believed in hypocrisy and wickedness and did not depart from them. For this reason, they are not saved, since they cannot be used in the building on account of their iniquities. Wherefore, they had been cut off and cast far away on account of the anger of the Lord for they have roused Him to anger. But I shall explain to you the other stones which you saw lying in great hunters and were not going into the building. The rough ones are those who have known the truth and did not remain in it, nor have they been joined to the saints. On this account, they are unfit for use." Hermas asked: "Who are those that have rents? " She answered: "These are they who are at discord in their hearts one with the other and are not at peace amongst themselves; they indeed keep peace before each other but when they separate one from the other, their wicked thoughts remain in their hearts. Then, these are the rents which are in the stones. These which are shortened are those who have indeed believed and have the larger share of righteousness; yet, they also have a considerable share of iniquity and, therefore, they are shortened and not whole." Hermas asked: "But who are these, Lady, that are white and round and yet do not fit into the building of the tower?" She answered: "How long will you be foolish and stupid and continue to put ask any kind of question and understand nothing? These are those who have faith indeed but they also have the riches of this world. Therefore, when tribulation comes, on account of their riches and business, they deny the Lord." Hermas answered her: "Then, when they will be useful for the building, Lady?" She answered: "When the riches that now seduce them have been circumscribed, then they will be of use to God. As a round stone cannot become square unless portions are cut off and cast away, so also those who are rich in this world cannot be useful to the Lord unless the riches are cut down. Learn this from your own case. When you were rich, you were useless but now you are useful and fit for life. Be useful to God, for you will be used as one of those stones."

Chapter 7

"Now the other stones which you saw cast far away from the tower, falling upon the public road and rolling from it into pathless places, are those who have indeed believed but through doubt have abandoned the true road. Thinking then that they could find a better, they wander and become wretched and enter upon pathless places. Those which fell into the fire and were burned are those who have departed for ever from the living God. The thought of repentance does not ever come into their hearts on account of their devotion to their lusts and the crimes which they have committed. Do you wish to know who are the others which fell near the waters but could not be rolled into them? These are they who have heard the Word and wish to be baptized in the name of the Lord but when chastity demanded by the truth comes into their recollection, they draw back and, again, they walk after their own wicked desires." She finished her exposition about the tower. Hermas considers himself shameless but still asked the Lady: "Is repentance possible for all those stories which have been cast away and did not fit into the building of the tower and will they have a place in this tower?" She said: "Repentance is yet possible but they cannot find a suitable place in this tower. They will be laid in another much inferior place and that too only when they have been tortured and completed the days of their sins. On this account, they will be transferred because they have partaken of the righteous Word. Then, only they will be removed from the punishments, when the thought of repenting of the evil deeds which they have done has come into their hearts. If this does not come into their hearts, they will not be saved, on account of the hardness of their heart."

Chapter 8

When Hermas had ceased to ask about all these matters, she told him: "Do you wish to see anything else?" Hermas was extremely eager to see something more and his countenance beamed with joy. She looked smiling to Hermas and said: "Do you see seven women around the tower?" Hermas said: "I do, Lady." She said: "This tower is supported by them according to the precept of the Lord. Listen now to their functions. The first of them, who is clasping her hands, is called Faith. Through her, the elects of God are saved. Another, who has her garments tucked up and acts with vigour, is called Self - restraint. She is the daughter of Faith. Who ever follows her will become happy in his life because he will restrain himself from all evil works, believing that is he restrains himself from all evil desire, he will inherit eternal life." Hermas said: "O Lady, who are the others?" She said: "They are the daughters of each other. One of them is called Simplicity, another Guilelessness, another Chastity, another Intelligence, another Love. When you do all the works of their mother, you will be able to live." Hermas said: "O Lady, I should like to know what power possesses each of them." She said: "Hear what power they have. Their powers are regulated by each other and follow each other in the order of their birth: from Faith arises Self - restraint; from Self - restraint, Simplicity; from Simplicity, Guilelessness; from Guilelessness, Chastity; from Chastity, Intelligence and from Intelligence Love. Therefore, the deeds of these are pure, chaste and divine. Who ever devotes himself to these and is able to hold fast by their works, shall have his dwelling in the tower with the saints of God." At this point, Hermas asked her if there is a conclusion concerning the ages. She cried out

with a loud voice: "Foolish man! Do you not see the tower yet building? When the tower is finished and built, then comes the end. I assure you that the tower will be soon finished. Ask me no more questions Let you and all the saints be content with what I have called to your remembrance and with my renewal of your spirits. But, observe that it is not for your own sake only that these revelations have been made to you; these revelations have been given to you so that you may show them to all. For after three days, about which you will take care to remember, I command you to speak all the words which I am to say to you into the ears of the saints. Hearing them and doing them, they may be cleansed from the iniquities and you along with them."

Chapter 9

Give ears unto me, O Sons: I have brought you up in much simplicity, guilelessness and chastity on account of the mercy of the Lord who has dropped His righteousness down upon so you that you may be righteous and holy from all your iniquity and depravity. Therefore, listen to me and be at peace with another, visit each other and bear each other's burdens; do not partake of God's creatures alone but give abundantly of them to the needy. Through the abundance of their food, some produce weakness in their flesh and thus corrupt their flesh while the flesh of others who have no food is corrupted because they do not have sufficient nourishment. On this account, their bodies waste away. This intemperance in eating is injurious to you who have abundance and do not distribute among those who are needy. Give heed to the judgement that is to come. Therefore, you who glory your health, give heed lest those who are needy should groan and their groans should ascend to the Lord and you will be shut out with all your goods beyond the gate of the tower. Wherefore, I now say to you who preside over the Church and love the first seats: "Be not like to drug mixers for the drug mixers carry their drugs in boxes but you carry your drug and poison in your heart. You are hardened and do not wish to cleanse your hearts and to ass any unity of aim to the purity of heart, that you may have mercy from the great King. Therefore, children, take heed that these dissensions of yours do not deprive you of your life. How will you instruct the elect of God if you yourselves have no instruction? Therefore, instruct each other and be at peace among yourselves so that I also, standing joyful before your Father, may give an account of you all to your Lord.""

Chapter 10

As she ceased to speak to Hermas, the six young men, who were engaged in the building, came and conveyed her to the tower; other four young men lifted up the eat and also carried it to the tower. Hermas did not see the faces of the last four because they were turns away from him. As she was going, Hermas asked her to reveal him the meaning of the three forms in which she appeared to him. In reply, she said: "About this you must ask another to reveal the meaning to you." The previous year she appeared to Hermas as an exceedingly old woman, sitting in a chair. In the second vision, her face was youthful but her skin and hair betokened age and she stood while she spoke to Hermas. She also was more joyful than the first occasion. In the third vision, she was entirely youthful and exquisitely beautiful, except only that she had the hair of an old woman; her face was beamed with joy and she sat on a seat. At this moment, Hermas was very sad concerning

those appearances because he longed much to know what meant the visions. Then, Hermas saw the old woman in the vision of the night as she told him: "Every prayer should be accompanied with humility; fast therefore and you will obtain from the Lord what you beg." Hermas fasted for one day.

That very night, a young man appeared to Hermas and said to him: "Why do you ask frequently revelations in prayer? Take heed, lest by asking many things, you injure your flesh; be content with these revelations Will you be able to see greater revelations than those which you have seen?" Hermas answered: "Sir, I ask only that, in regard to these three forms, the revelation may be rendered complete." The young man answered to Hermas: "How long are you senseless? Your doubts make you senseless because you have not your hearts turned towards the Lord." Hermas replied: "From you, sir, we shall learn all these things more accurately."

Chapter 11

He said: "Hear then about the three forms about which you were inquiring. Why in the first vision did she appear to you as an old woman seated on a chair? Because your spirit is now old, withered up and has lost its power in consequence of your infirmities and doubts. Like elderly men who have no hope of renewing their strength and expect nothing but their last sleep, so you, weakened by worldly occupations, have given yourselves to the sloth and have not cast your cares upon the Lord. Therefore, your spirit is broken and you have grown old in your sorrows." Hermas replied: "Sir, then I should like to know why she sat on a chair?" He answered: "Because every weak person sits on a chair on account of his weakness so that his weakness may be sustained. Lo! You have the form of the first vision."

Chapter 12

He continued: "In the second vision you saw her standing with a youthful countenance and more joyful than before; she still had the skin and hair of an aged woman. Hear also this parable: when someone becomes somewhat old, he despairs of himself on account of his weakness and poverty and looks forward to nothing but only to the last day of his life. Then, suddenly, an inheritance is left him; hearing about this he rises up and, becoming exceedingly joyful, puts on strength. Now he no longer reclines but stands up. His spirit, already destroyed by his previous actions, is renewed and he longer sits but acts with vigour. So happened with you on hearing the revelation which God gave you: God had compassion on you, renewed your spirit and left aside your infirmities. Vigour arose in you and you grew strong in faith. Seeing your strength, the Lord rejoiced. On this account, He showed you the building of the tower. If you continue peacefully with all your heart, He will show you other things."

Chapter 13

"Now, in the third vision, you saw her still younger; she was noble and joyful and her countenance was serene. You have received the renewal of your spirit by seeing these good things. This is just as when some good news come to someone who is sad; he immediately forgets his former sorrows and looks only for the good news he has heard. The future is made strong for good and his spirit is renewed on account of the joy he has reached. You saw her sitting on a seat and this means

that position is one of strength because a seat has four feet and stands firmly. The world is also kept together by means of four elements. Therefore, those who repent completely and with the whole heart will become young and firmly established. Now the whole revelation is given to you. Make no further demands for revelations. If anything ought to be revealed, it will be revealed to you."

Vision fourth - concerning the trial and tribulations that are to come upon men

Chapter 1

Hermas saw another vision, twenty days after the former one. This was a representation of the tribulation that is to come. Hermas was on his way to a country house along the road in Campania, in a district rarely traversed. As he was walking, Hermas prayed the Lord to complete the revelations which He had made to him through His Holy Church, so that He may strengthen Hermas and grant repentance to all His servants who were going astray, that His great and glorious name might be glorified, because He vouchsafed to show His marvels to Hermas. As Hermas was glorifying God and giving Him thanks, a voice answered him: "Doubt not, Hermas." Hermas began to think with himself: "What reason have I to doubt, I who have been established by the Lord and who have seen such glorious sights." Hermas advanced a little and saw dust rising even to the heavens, Hermas began to tell to himself: "Are cattle approaching and raising the dust?" This was at a furlong from him. Seeing that the dust is increasingly rising, Hermas imagined to himself that it was something sent from God. The sun shone out a little and Hermas saw a mighty beast like a whale and from its mouth proceeded fiery locusts. This beast was about a hundred feet long and had a head like an urn. Hermas began to weep and called the rescue of the Lord. Then, Hermas heard: "Doubt not, O Hermas." Clothed with the faith in the Lord and remembering the great things which God taught him, Hermas baldly faced the beast, which came on with such noise and force that it could destroy a city. Hermas approached the monstrous beast which stretched itself on the ground and showed only its tongue without stirring at all until Hermas passed by. The beast had four colours on its head: black, then fiery and bloody, then golden and lastly white.

Chapter 2

After Hermas passed by the wild beast and moved forward about thirty feet, a virgin met him. She was adorned as if she was proceeding from the bridal chamber. She was clothed entirely in white, with white sandals, veiled up to her forehead and her head was covered by a hood. She had white hair. Hermas knew her from his former visions that this was the Church and became more joyful. She saluted Hermas: "Hail, O man" and he answered her "Lady, hail". She said to Hermas: "Has nothing crossed your path?" Hermas said: "I was met by a beast of such a size that it could destroy peoples but through the power of the Lord and His great mercy, I escaped from it." She said: "Well did you escape from it because you cast your care on God and opened your heart to the Lord, believing that you can be saved by no other than His great and glorious name. On this account, the Lord has sent His angel Thegri who rules over the beasts and has up his mouth so that it cannot tear you. You have escaped from a great tribulation on account of your faith

and because you did not doubt in the presence of such a beast. Therefore, go and tell the elect of the Lord His mighty deeds and say them that this beast is a type of the great tribulation that is coming. If the people prepare themselves, repent with all their heart and turn to the Lord, it will be possible for you to escape it, if your heart be pure and spotless and you spend the rest of the days of your life in serving the Lord blamelessly. Cast your cares upon the Lord and He will divert them. Those who doubt should trust the God Lord foe He is all - powerful and can turn away His anger away from you and scourges on the doubters. Woe to those who hear these words and despise them; it would have been better for them if they were not born." (2)

Chapter 3

Hermas asked her about the four colours which the beast had on the head. She answered: "Again, you are inquisitive in regard to such matters." Hermas said: "Yes, Lady; make known to me what they are." She said: "Listen, the black is the world in which we dwell but the fiery and bloody point out that the world must perish through blood and fire; the golden parts are you who have escaped from this world. For as gold is tested by fire and thus becomes useful, so are you tested who dwell in it. Therefore, those who continue steadfast and are put through the fire will be purified by it. As gold casts away its dross, so also you will cast away all sadness and straightness and you will be made pure so as to fit into the building of the tower. But the white part is the age that is to come, in which the elect of God will dwell since those elected by God to eternal life will be spotless and pure. Wherefore, cease not speaking these things into the ears of the saints. Then, this is the type of the great tribulation that is to come. If you wish it, it will be nothing. Remember those things which were written down before." Saying that, she departed but Hermas did see into what place she retired. However, there was a noise and Hermas turned round in alarm, thinking that the beast was coming.

Vision fifth - concerning the commandments

After Hermas prayed at home and sat on his couch, a man of glorious aspect entered, dressed like a shepherd, with a white skin of a goat, a wallet on his shoulders and a rod in his hand. The man saluted Hermas who saluted him too. The guest immediately sat down beside Hermas and told him: "I have been sent by a most venerable angel to dwell with the remaining days of your life." Hermas thought that he came to tempt him and told the guest: "Who are you? I know him to whom I have been entrusted." The guest said to Hermas: "No. I am the shepherd to whom you have been entrusted." While he was still speaking, the figure of the guest was changed and then Hermas knew that he had been entrusted to him. Straightaway Hermas became confused, fear took hold of him and he was overpowered with deep sorrow that he had answered the visitor so wickedly and foolishly. The visitor answered to Hermas: "Do not be confounded but receive strength from the commandments which I am going to give you. I have been sent to show you again all the things which you saw before, especially those which are useful to you. First of all, write down my commandments and similitudes; you will also write down the other things as I will show you. For this purpose, I command you to write down the commandments and similitudes first so that you may read

them easily and be capable to keep them." Accordingly, Hermas wrote down the commandments and similitudes exactly as his visitor ordered him. Hermas says that when the people had heard the commandments and similitudes and practise them with pure minds, these people will receive from the Lord all He had promised to them. But if the people who had heard these commandments do not respect them but continue to add to their sins, they will receive from the Lord the opposite things. The shepherd, even the angel of repentance, ordered Hermas to write all these words.

Book II - Commandments

Commandment First

On Faith in God

First of all, believe that there is one God who created and finished all things and made all things out of nothing. Only God can contain the whole but God cannot be contained. God cannot be defined in words nor conceived by mind. Therefore, the humans should have faith in Him and fear Him; fearing Him creates self - control. The people (the believers) should keep all these commands; thus, they will cast away from themselves all wickedness, they will emphasize the strength of righteousness and will live to God.

Commandment second

On avoiding evil - speaking and on giving alms in simplicity

He told Hermas: "Be simple and guileless and you will be like the children who do not know the wickedness that ruins human life. First, speak evil of no one nor listen with pleasure to anyone who speaks evil of another. But if you listen, you will partake of the sin of who speaks evil; if you believe the slander which you hear, you will have something against your brother. Thus, you will be guilty of the sin of the slanderer. Slander is evil and an unsteady demon. It never abides to peace but always remains in discord. Keep yourself from it and you will always be at peace with all. Put on a holiness in which there is no wicked cause of offence but all deeds are equable and joyful. Practise goodness. From the rewards of your labours, which God gives you, give to all the needy in simplicity, Give to all for God wishes His gifts to be shared amongst all. without hesitation to whom you are to give or not to give. Those who receive, will render an account to God why and for what they have received. The afflicted who receive will not be condemned but who receive on false pretences will suffer punishment. Then, he who gives is guiltless. For as he received from the Lord, he accomplished his service in simplicity, not hesitating as to whom he should give and to whom he should not give. If this service is accomplished in simplicity, it is glorious with God. Therefore, he who thus ministers in simplicity, will live to God. Keep these commandments as given by

God so that your repentance and the repentance of your house may be found in simplicity and your heart may be pure and stainless."

Commandment third

On avoiding falsehood and on the repentance of Hermas for his dissimulation

Again, the shepherd said to Hermas: "Love the truth and let nothing but truth proceed from your mouth, that the spirit which God has placed in your flesh may be found truthful before all men. The Lord who dwells in you will be glorified because the Lord is truthful in every word an no falsehood is in Him. Therefore, those who lie, deny the Lord and rob Him, not giving Him back the deposit which they have received. They have received from Him a spirit free from falsehood. If they give back to Hom this spirit untruthful, they pollute the commandment of the Lord and become robbers." On hearing these words, Hermas wept most violently. When he saw him weeping, the shepherd told Hermas: "Why do you weep?" Hermas said: "Because, sir, I never spoke a true word in my life but I have ever spoken cunningly to all and have affirmed a lie for the truth to all. No one ever contradicted me but my word was given credit. How can I live since I have acted in my manner?" He said to Hermas: "Your feelings are indeed right and sound because, as a servant of God, you ought to have walked in truth and not to have joined an evil conscience with the spirit of truth, nor to have caused sadness to the holy and true Spirit." Hermas told him: "I never listen to these words with so much attention." He said to Hermas: "Now you hear them and keep them so that even the falsehoods which you formerly told in your transactions may come to be believed through the truthfulness of your present statements. For even these statements of yours can become worthy of credit. If you keep these precepts and from this moment forward you speak nothing but the truth, it will be possible for you to obtain life. Whosoever shall hear this commandment and will depart from the great wickedness of falsehood, shall live to God."

Commandment fourth

On putting one’s wife away for adultery

Chapter 1

The shepherd said: "I charge you to guard your chastity and let no thought enter your heart about another man’s wife, about fornication or about similar iniquities because, by doing this, you commit a great sin. If you always remember your own wife, you will never sin. If the thought about another man’s wife or about fornication, you will sin. If you have other similar thoughts, you commit sin. For a servant of God, this thought is a great sin. If any one commits this wicked deed, he

works death for himself. Therefore, attend and refrain from this thought for where purity dwells, iniquity ought not to penetrate the heart of a righteous man." Hermas said: "Sir, allow me to ask you several questions." "Say on" he said. Hermas said to him: "Sir, if anyone has a wife who trusts in the Lord and he finds out that she commits adultery, does this man commit sin if he continues to live with her?" The shepherd replied: "As long as the husband remains ignorant of her sin, he does not commit any transgression in living with her. If the husband knows that his wife has gone astray and if the woman does not repent but persists in her fornication and the husband continues to live with her, he is also guilty of her crime and a sharer in her adultery." Hermas asked: "Sir, what then is the husband to do, if his wife continues in her vicious practices?" He said: "The husband should put her away and remain by himself. If he puts his wife away and marries another woman, he also commits adultery." Hermas replied: "What if the discharged woman should repent and wishes to return to her husband: she shall not be taken back by her husband?" The shepherd said: "Assuredly. If the husband does not take her back, he sins and brings a great sin upon himself because he ought to take back the sinner who has repented. This obligation of the husband should not be frequently applied because for the servants of God there is only one repentance. Therefore, if the divorced wife may repent, the husband ought not to marry another woman, when his wife has been put away. In this matter, man and woman are to be treated similarly. Moreover, adultery is committed by those who pollute their flesh as well as by those who imitate the heathen in their actions. Therefore, if anyone persists in such deeds and does not repent, withdraw from him and cease to live with him; otherwise, you are a sharer in his sin. Therefore, the injunction had been laid on you, that you should remain by yourselves, both man and woman, for in such person repentance can take place. I do not give opportunity for committing these deeds; the main principle is that he who sinned should not sin any more. As for his former transgressions, there is One who can provide cure because He has power over all."

Chapter 2

Hermas asked him again: "Since the Lord has vouchsafed to dwell always with me, bear with me a while I utter a few words. I do not understand anything and my heart had been hardened by my previous mode of life. Let me understand for I am exceedingly dull and I understand absolutely nothing." He answered to Hermas: "I am set over repentance and I give understanding to all who repent. You do not think that it is a great wisdom to repent? Repentance is great wisdom. For he who sinned understands that he acted wickedly in the sight of the Lord, he remembers his deeds he repents and no longer acts wickedly but does good generously; he humbles and torments his soul because he has sinned. Therefore, you see that repentance is great wisdom." Hermas answered him: "Sir, it is for this reason that I inquire carefully in all things, especially because I am a sinner. I wish to know what works I should do so that I may live, for my sins are numerous and various." He told Hermas: "You shall live if you keep my commandments and walk in them; whosoever shall hear and respect these commandments, shall live to God."

Chapter 3

Hermas told him: "I would like to continue my questions." He said: "Speak on." Hermas said: "Sir, I heard that some teachers maintain that there is no other repentance than that which takes place when we descend into the water and receive remission of our former sins." The shepherd said to Hermas: "What you heard is a sound doctrine and this is really the case. He who received remission of his sins ought not to sin any more but to live in purity. However, since you inquire diligently into all things, I will point out this to you, not as giving occasion for error to those who are to believe or have lately believed in the Lord. Those who have now believed and those who are to believe, have not repentance for their sins but they have remission of their previous sins. The Lord has no repentance for those who have been called before these days. Knowing the heart and foreknowing all things, the Lord knew the weakness of men and the manifold wiles of the devil, that the devil would inflict some evil on the servants of God and act wickedly towards them. Being merciful, the Lord has had mercy on the work of His hand and has set repentance for them. The Lord entrusted to me power over his repentance. Therefore, I say to you that if any one is tempted by the devil and sins after that great and holy calling in which the Lord has called His people to ever - lasting life, he has the opportunity to repent only once. If this person should frequently sin afterwards and then repent, his repentance will be of no avail because he will hardly live." Hermas said: "Sir, I feel that life has come back to me in listening attentively to these commandments. I know that I shall be saved if, in the future, I will not sin anymore." He said: "You and all who keep these commandments will be saved."

Chapter 4

Hermas asked again: "Sir, since you listened to me so patiently, will you show me this also?" He said: "Speak." Hermas said: "if a wife or husband die and the widower or widow marry, does he or she commit sin?" He said: "There is no sin in marrying again but if they remain unmarried, they gain greater honour and glory with the Lord. If they marry, they do not sin. Therefore, guard your chastity and purity and you will live to God. Henceforth, keep the commandments I give you and the commandments which I am to give from the very day since when you are entrusted to me and I will dwell in your house. If you keep my commandments, your former sins will be forgotten. All shall be forgiven for those who keep those commandments and walk in this chastity."

Commandment fifth

On sadness of heart and of patience

Chapter 1

"Be patient" he said "and of good understanding and you will rule over every wicked work and you will work all righteousness. If you will be patient, the Holy Spirit that dwells in you will be pure. He will not be darkened by any evil spirit but, dwelling in a broad region, he will rejoice and be glad; with the vessel in which he dwells, he will serve God in goodness, having great peace within himself. If any

outburst of anger takes place, forthwith the Holy Spirit, who is tender, is straitened and, not having a pure place, will seek to depart. The Holy Spirit is suffocated by the vile spirit and cannot attend to the Lord as He wishes, for anger pollutes him. The Lord dwells in long - suffering but the devil dwells in anger. The Lord dwells in calmness and greatness of mind but anger is the entertainment house of the devil. When dwelling in the same habitation, the two spirits are at discord with each other and are troublesome to the person in whom they dwell. If a very small piece of wormwood is placed into a jar of honey, the honey is entirely destroyed and the small wormwood takes away the sweetness of the honey so that it no longer affords any gratification to its owner but became bitter and useless. If the wormwood is not placed into the honey, then the honey remains sweet and is useful to its owner. Patience is greater than honey, is useful to God and the Lord dwells in it. Anger is bitter and useless. If anger is mingled with patience, the patience is polluted and its prayer is not useful to God." Hermas said: "Sir, I would like to know the power of anger, that I may guard myself against it." He said: "If you do not guard yourself against it, you and your house lose all hope of salvation. Therefore, guard yourself against it. For I am with you and all who repent with their whole heart, will depart from it. I will be with them and I will save them all for all are justified by the most holy angel."

Chapter 2

"Hear now", he said, "how wicked is the action of anger and in what way it overthrows the servants of God by its action and turns them from righteousness but it does not turn away those who are full of faith nor does it act on them, for the power of the Lord is with them. It is the thoughtless and doubting that it turns away. As soon as anger sees such men standing steadfast, it throws itself into their hearts. For nothing at all, the man or the woman become embittered on account of some senseless affair, such as their food or some superfluous word which had been uttered, or on account of some friend or some gift or debt or some other senseless affair. For the servants of God, all these things are foolish, empty and unprofitable. Patience is great, mighty strong, calm un the midst of great enlargement, joyful, rejoicing free from care, glorifying God at all times, without bitterness in her and abiding continually humble and quiet. This patience dwells with those who have complete faith. Anger is foolish, capricious and senseless. Of folly is begotten bitterness, and of bitterness anger and of anger frenzy, which is the product of so many evils and ends in a great and incurable sin. The vessel in which dwell the Holy Spirit and all the other spirits cannot contain them but overflows. The tender spirit, not being accustomed to dwell with the wicked spirit, nor with hardness, withdraws from such a man and seeks to dwell with meekness and peacefulness. When it withdraws from the man in whom it dwelt, the man is emptied of the righteous spirit. Being hence forward filled with evil spirits, he is in a state of anarchy in every action, being dragged in all directions by evil spirits. There is a complete darkness in his mind as everything good. This is what happens to all who are angry. Therefore, you should depart from the most wicked spirit anger and be patient; you should resist anger and bitterness and you will be found in company with the purity which is by God the Lord. You should take care not to neglect by any chance this commandment for if you obey this commandment, you will be able to keep all the other commandments which I am to give you. Be string, then, in

these commandments, put on power and let all put on power, as many as wish to walk in them."(3)

Commandment sixth

How to recognize the two spirits attendant on each man and how to distinguish the suggestions of the one from those of the other

Chapter 1

"I gave you", he said, "directions in the first commandment to attend faith, fear and self - restraint." Hermas said: "Even so, sir." He said: "Now I wish to show you the powers of these so that you may know what powers each possesses. For their powers are double and have a relation to the righteous and unrighteous. Therefore, you should trust the righteous but you should not trust the unrighteous. The path of the righteous is straight but the path of the unrighteous is crooked, You should walk in the straight and even way and mind not the crooked for the crooked path has no roads but has many pathless places and stumbling blocks in it and is rough and stormy. The crooked path is injurious to those who walk therein. Those who walk in the straight road walk evenly without stumbling because this road is neither rough nor thorny. Then, you see that it is better to walk on this road." Hermas said: "I wish to go by this road." He said: "You will go by it and whoever turns to the Lord with all his heart will walk in it."

Chapter 2

He said: "Hear now in regard to faith. There are two angels with man: one angel of righteousness and one angel of iniquity." Hermas said to him: "Sir, how am I to know the powers of these, for both dwell in me?" He said: "Hear and understand them. The angel of righteousness is gentler and modest, meek and peaceful. Therefore, when he ascends into your heart, forthwith he talks to you of righteousness, purity, chastity, contentment and righteous deed and glorious virtue. When all these ascend into your heart, you should know that the angel of righteousness is with you. These are the deeds of the angel of righteousness. Trust him and his works. Look now at the works if the angel of iniquity. First, he is wrathful, bitter and foolish; his works are evil and ruin the servants of God. When he ascends into your heart, know him by his works." Hermas answered: "I do not know how I shall perceive him." He said: "Hear and understand. When anger or hardness come upon you, know that he is in you. You will know that this is the case also when you are attacked by a longing after many transactions, by the richest delicacies, by the drunken levels, by various luxuries, by things improper, by hankering after women, by overreaching, by pride and blustering and by whatever is like to these. When these ascend into your heart, you should know that the angel of iniquity is in you. Once you know that the angel of iniquity is in you, depart from him, do not trust him from any point of view because his deeds are evil and useless to the servants of God. You must understand the actions of both angels; you must trust the angel of righteousness; depart from the angel of iniquity because his instruction is bad in every deed. Although a man is most faithful and the thought of this angel ascend into his heart, that man or woman must sin. On the other hand, if

the thought of the angel of righteousness ascends into their heart, however bad they may be, they must do something good. Therefore, it is good to follow the angel of righteousness but to bid farewell to the angel of iniquity. This commandment exhibits the deeds of faith that you may trust the works of the angel of righteousness and doing them, you may live to God. Believe that the works of the angel of iniquity are hard. If you refuse to do them, you will live to God."

Commandment seventh

On fearing God and not fearing the devil

"Fear" he said "the Lord and keep his commandments. (4) If you keep the commandments of God, you will be powerful in every action and all your actions will be incomparable. Due to your fear of God, you will do all things well. This is the fear which you ought to have so that you may be saved. But fear not the devil because, fearing the Lord, you will have dominion over the devil which is powerless. Who does not have power, on no account ought to be object of fear. He in whom there is glorious power is truly to be feared. Every one who has power ought to be feared but he who has no power is despised by all. Therefore, you should fear the deeds of devil since they are wicked. Fearing the Lord, you will not do these deeds but you will refrain from them. There are two kinds of fear: if you do not wish to do evil, fear the Lord and you will not do it. Wherefore, the fear of the Lord is strong, great and glorious. Therefore, fear the Lord and you will live to Him. As many fear Him and keep His commandments, will live to God." Hermas said: "Sir, why did you say in regard to those that keep His commandments that they will live to God?" He said: "Because all creations fear the Lord but all creation does not keep His commandments. Only those who fear the Lord and keep His commandments have life with God; as to those who do not keep His commandments, there is no life in them."

Commandment eighth

We ought to shun that which is evil and do what is good

He said: "I told you that the creatures of God are double, for restraint is double; sometimes restraint has to be exercised and sometimes there is no need of restraint." Hermas said: "Sir, make known to me in what cases restraint has to be exercised and in which cases it has not to be exercised." He said: "Restrain yourself in regard to evil and do not do it; do not exercise any restrain in regard to good but do it. If you will exercise any restrain in the doing of good, you will commit a great sin. If you exercise restraint, so as not to do what is evil, you are practising right righteousness. Therefore, restrain yourself from any iniquity and that which is good." Hermas asked: "Sir, what are the evil deeds from which we must restrain ourselves?" He said: "We must restrain ourselves from adultery and fornication, from unlawful revelling, from wicked luxury, from indulgence in many

kinds of food and the extravagance of riches, from boastfulness, from haughtiness, insolence, lies, backbiting, hypocrisy, remembrance of wrong and all slander. These are the most wicked deeds in human life. Therefore, the servant of God must restrain himself from all these deeds for he, who does not restrain himself from these, cannot live to God. Listen to the deeds that accompany these." Hermas asked: "Sir, are there any other evil deeds?" He said: "There are and the servant of God must restrain himself too: theft, lying, robbery, false witness, overreaching, wicked lust, deceit, vainglory, boast fulness and other vices like these." Hermas said: "Do you not think that these are really wicked?" He answered: "These are exceedingly wicked in the servants of God who must restrain from all of these. Therefore, restrain yourself from all these so that you may live to God and you will be enrolled among those who restrain themselves concerning these matters. These are the things from which you must restrain yourself."

He said: "Listen to the things in regard to which you have not to exercise self - restraint but which you ought to do. Restrain not yourself in regard to that which is good, but do it." Hermas said: "Sir, tell me the nature of the good deeds that I may walk in them and wait on them so that, by doing them, I can be saved." He said: "Listen to the good deeds which you ought to do and in regard to which there is no requisite of self - restraint. First of all is faith, then fear of God, love concord, words of righteousness, truth, patience. In human life nothing is better than these. If anyone attends to these and does not restrain himself from them, blessed is he in his life. To these are the following attendant: helping widows, looking after orphans and the needy, rescuing the servants of God from necessities, being hospitable (for in hospitality good - doing finds a field), never opposing any one, being quiet, having fewer needs than all men, remembering the aged, practising righteousness, watching the brotherhood, bearing insolence, being long - suffering, encouraging those who are sick in soul, not casting those who have fallen into sin from the faith but turning them back and restoring them to peace of mind, admonishing sinners, not oppressing the debtors and the needy and if there are other actions like these. Do these seem good to you?" Hermas said: "Sir, what is better than these?" He said: "Then walk in them and restrain not yourself from them and you will live to God. Therefore, keep this commandment. If you do good and do not restrain yourself from it, you will live to God. All who act thus will live to God. Again, if you refuse to do evil and restrain yourself from it, you will live to God, who keep these commandments and walk in them."

Commandment ninth

Prayer must be made to God without ceasing and with unwavering confidence

He said to Hermas: "Put away doubting from you and do not hesitate to ask the Lord, saying to yourself: "How can I ask of the Lord and receive from Him, seeing that I have sinned so much against Him?" Thus, do not reason with yourself but turn to the Lord with all your heart and ask of Him without doubting and you will know the multitude of His tender mercies; you will know that He will never leave you but will fulfil the request of your soul. For He is not like men who remember evils done against them. He Himself does not remember evils and has compassion for His own creature. Therefore, cleanse your heart from all the vanities of this world and from the words already mentioned; ask the Lord and you will receive all.

You will not be denied in all the requests which you make to the Lord without doubting. If you doubt in your heart, you will receive none of your requests for those who doubt regarding God are double - souled and do not obtain any of their requests. Those who are prefect in faith ask everything trusting in the Lord and they obtain because they ask nothing doubting without being double - souled. Even if he repents, every double - souled human will be saved difficultly. Therefore, cleanse your heart from every doubt and put on faith because it is strong and trust God that you will obtain from Him all that you ask. If at any time, after you have asked, you are slower than you expected in obtaining your request, do not doubt because you have not obtained the request of your soul: invariably, it is on account of some temptation or some sin of which you are ignorant that you are slower in obtaining your request. Wherefore, do not cease to make the request of your soul and you will obtain it. If you grow weary and waver in your request, blame yourself and not Him, who does not give to you. Consider this doubting state of mind because it is wicked, senseless and entirely turns man from the faith, even if they can be very strong. This doubting is the daughter of devil and acts exceedingly wickedly to the servants of God. Despise doubting and gain the mastery over it in everything; cover yourself with faith, which is strong and powerful. Faith promises all things and perfects all things. Doubt, which has no through faith in itself, fails in every work which it undertakes. Thus, you see that faith is from above, from the Lord and has great power. Doubt is an earthly spirit, coming from the devil and is powerless. Serve that which has power, namely faith and keep away from doubt, which has no power and you will live to God. All whose minds have been set on these things will live on to God."

Commandment tenth

Of grief and not grieving the Spirit of God which is in us

Chapter 1

He said: "Remove from you the grief because she is the sister of doubt and anger." Hermas said: "Sir, how is grief the sister of doubt and anger since anger, doubt and grief seem to be quite different from each other." He answered: " O man, you are senseless. Do you not perceive that grief is more wicked then all these spirits and most terrible to the servants of God. More than all other spirits, grief destroys and crushes out the Holy Spirit. Yet, on the other hand, grief saves the human being." Hermas said: "I am senseless, and I do not understand those parables. I do not perceive how she can crush out and, on the other hand, save him?" He said: "Listen. Those who have never searched for the truth, nor investigated the nature of the Divinity but have simply believed, when they devote themselves to Divinity. They have simply believed in the Divinity, when they devote themselves to Divinity and become mixed up with business, wealth, heathen friendship and many other actions of this world. They do not perceive the parables of Divinity. Their minds are darkened by these actions, they are corrupted and become dried up. Like beautiful vines, when they are neglected, they are withered up by thorns and various plants. Men who have believed and afterwards have fallen away into many of those actions previously mentioned, go astray in their minds and lose all understanding of righteousness. If they hear about righteousness, there minds are occupied with their business and do not give heed

at all. On the other hand, those who have the fear of God, who search after Godhead and truth, having their hearts turned to the Lord, perceive and understand quickly what is said to them because they fear God in them. Where the Lord dwells, there is much understanding. Adhere to the Lord and you will understand and perceive all things."

Chapter 2

He said: "Hear the, foolish man, how grief crushes out the Holy Spirit and saves, on the other hand. When the doubting man attempts any deed and fails in it on account of his doubt, the grief enters into the man, grieves the Holy Spirit and crushes him out. On the other hand, when anger attaches itself to a man in regard to any matter and he is embittered, then grief enters into the heart of man who was irritated and who grieved at the deed he did and repents that he was wrought a wicked deed. Then this grief appears to be accompanied by salvation because the man, after having done the wicked deed, repented. Both actions grieve the Spirit: doubt grieves the Spirit because it did not accomplish its object; anger grieves the Spirit because it did what was wicked. Both doubt and anger are grievous to the Holy Spirit. Wherefore, remove grief from you and do not crush the Holy Spirit which dwells in you, lest grief entreats God against you and God withdraws from you. The Spirit of God, which has been granted to us to dwell in this body, does not endure grief or difficulty. Wherefore, out on cheerfulness, which is always agreeable and acceptable to God, and rejoice in it. Every cheerful does what is good and despises grief but the sorrowful man always acts wickedly because he grieves the Holy Spirit and, by grieving the Holy Spirit, he works iniquity, neither by entreating the Lord nor by confessing to Him. The entreaty if the sorrowful man has no power to ascend to the altar of God." Hermas said: "Why the entreaty of the grieved man does not ascend to the altar?" He said: "Because grief sits in his heart. Then, grief mingled with his entreaty does not permit the entreaty to ascend pure to the altar of God. As vinegar and wine, when mixed in the same vessel, do not give the same pleasure as wine alone gives, so grief mixed with the Holy Spirit does not produce the same entreaty as would be produced by the Holy Spirit alone. Cleanse yourself from this wicked grief and you will live to God. All who drive grief away from them and put on all cheerfulness will live to God."

Commandment eleventh

The Spirit and the prophets to be tried by their works; also, of the two kinds of spirit

He pointed to Hermas some men sitting on a seat and one man sitting on a chair. He said to Hermas: "Do you see the persons sitting on the seat?" Hermas said: "I do, Sir." He said: "These are the faithful and he who sits on the chair is a false prophet, ruining the minds of the servants of God. He ruins the doubters, not the faithful. These doubters go to him as to a soothsayer and inquire of him what will happen to them; he, the false prophet, not having within himself the power of a divine spirit, answers them according to their inquiries and their wicked desires, filling their souls with expectations, according to their own wishes. Being empty himself, he gives empty answers to empty inquirers, for each answer is made to the emptiness of man. Sometimes, he utters some true words, for the devil fills him

with his own spirit, hoping that he may be able to overcome some of the righteous. Many who are strong in the faith of the Lord and clothed with truth have no connection to such spirits but keep away from them. There are also many doubtful minds, who frequently repent, who betake themselves to soothsaying as heathen and by their idolatry, bring greater sin upon themselves. He who inquires of a false prophet in regard to any action is an idolater, devoid of truth and foolish. No spirit given by God requires to be asked but, such a spirit having the power of Divinity, speaks all things of itself, for it proceeds from above the power of the Divine Spirit. But the spirit asked and which speaks according to the human desires is earthly light, powerless and altogether silent, if not questioned." Hermas said: "Sir, how then will a man know which of them is the prophet and which is the false prophet?" He said: "I will tell you about both the prophets and you can test the true and the false prophet according to my directions. Test the man who has the Divine Spirit by his life. First, he who has the Divine Spirit proceeding from above is meek, peaceable and humble; he refrains from any iniquity and vain desire of this world; he contends himself with fewer wants than other men. When asked, he does not reply; he does not privately. The Holy Spirit speaks only when God wishes it to speak and not when man wishes the Spirit to speak. When a man, having the Divine Spirit, comes into an assembly of righteous men who have faith in Divine Spirit who offers prayer to God, the angel of the prophetic Spirit, who is destined for him, fills the men who, being filled with the Holy Spirit, speaks to the multitude as the Lord wishes. Then, the Spirit of Divinity becomes manifest. Therefore, any power which comes from the Spirit of Divinity belongs to the Lord." He said: "Hear then about the Spirit which is earthly, empty, powerless and foolish. The man who seems to have the Spirit exalts himself, wishes to have the first seat; he is bold, imprudent, talkative, lives in the midst of many luxuries and many other delusions and takes reward for his prophecy; if he does not receive rewards, he does not prophesy. Can the Divine Spirit take rewards and prophesy? It is not possible that the prophet of God should do this but prophets of this character are possessed by an earthly spirit which never approaches an assembly of righteous men but shuns them. The earthly spirit associates itself with doubters and vain issues; it prophesies to them in a corner and deceives them by speaking to them according to their desires, with mere empty words. The earthly spirit answers to the empty. When it comes to an assembly of righteous men who have a spirit of divinity and they offer up prayer, the righteous is emptied and his spirit flees from him by fear. This person is dumbed, entirely crushed and unable to speak. On leaving the spirits of righteous, the empty prophets are empty as when they came. You should resist them by arming yourself with the fear of God because the fear of God dwells in good desire. Try the deeds and life of the man who claims to be inspired. As for you, trust the Spirit coming from God and has power; do not trust at all the earthly spirit because it is powerless and his provenience is from the devil. Hear the parable which I am to tell you. Take a stone, throw it to the sky and see if you can penetrate it; or, take a squirt of water into the sky and see if you can penetrate it." Hermas said: "Sir, how these things can take place? Both are impossible." He said: "As these things are impossible, so also are the earthly spirits, powerless and without essence. On the other hand, look at the power which comes from above. Hail is a very small grain but, when it falls on a man’s head, it gives him very much annoyance. Again, take the drop which falls from a pitcher to the ground and yet hollows a stone. You see that the smallest things coming from above have great

power when they fall upon the earth. Thus, the Divine Spirit coming from above is also powerful. Trust then that Spirit but have nothing to do with the other."

Commandment twelfth

On the twofold desire. The commandments of God can be kept and believers ought not to fear the devil

Chapter 1

He said to Hermas: "Put away from you all wicked desire and clothe yourself with good and chaste desire for, clothed with this desire, you will hate wicked desire and you will rein yourself on even as you wish. Wicked desire is wild and it is difficultly tamed because it is terrible and, by its wilderness, exceedingly consumes humans. The servant of God is especially consumed by wicked desire if he falls into it and is devoid of understanding. The wicked desire consumes all those who do not have on them the garment of good desire but are entangled and mixed up with this world. It delivers these up to death." Hermas said: "Sir, them what are the deeds of wicked desire which deliver men over to death? Make them known to me and I will refrain from them." He said: "Listen, then, to the works in which evil desire slays the servants of God."

Chapter 2

"Foremost of all is the desire another’s wife or husband, extravagance and many useless dainties and drinks as well as many other foolish luxuries for all luxury is foolish and empty in the servants of God. These are evil desires which slay the servants of God. This evil desire is the daughter of the devil. You must refrain from evil desires because, by refraining, you may live to God. Those who are mastered by the evil desires and do not resist them, will perish al last, for these desires are fatal. Therefore, you must put on the desire of righteousness and, arming yourself with the fear of God, you will resist the evil desires. The fear of God the Lord dwells in good desire. If evil desire see you armed with the fear of God, resisting the evil desire, it will flee far from you; it will no longer appear to you because it fears your armour. Go then, garlanded with the crown which you have gained for victory over it, to the desire of righteousness and, delivering up to it the prize which you have received, serve it even as it wishes. If you deserve good desire, be subject to it. You will gain the mastery over evil desire and make it subject to you even as you wish."

Chapter 3

Hermas said: "I would like to know in what way I ought to serve good desire." He said: "Hear: you will practice righteousness and virtue, truth and fear of the Lord, faith and meekness and whatsoever resembling excellences. By practising these virtues, you will be a pleasing - servant of God and you will live to Him; every one who will serve good desire shall live to God."

He concluded the twelve commandments and said to Hermas: "You have now these commandments. Walk in them and exhort those who hear you that the repentance may be pure during the rest of their lives. Accomplish carefully this

ministry which now I entrust to you and you will make an essential fulfilment. You will find favour among those who are repent and they will give heed to your words for I will be with you and I will compel them to obey you." Hermas said to him: "Sir, these commandments are great, good glorious, fitted to gladden the heart of the man who can perform them. I do not know if these commandments can be kept by man, because they are exceedingly hard." He answered and said to Hermas: "If you assume as certain that they can be kept, then you will easily keep them and they will not be hard. But if you imagine that they cannot be kept by man, then you will not keep them. Now I say to you: if you do not keep the commandments but neglect them, you will not be saved, nor your children, nor your house since you have already determined for yourself that these commandments cannot be kept by man."

Chapter 4

These things were told to Hermas in tones of deepest anger. Hermas was confounded and exceedingly afraid for his figure was altered and no human being could endure his anger. Seeing Hermas agitated and confused, he began to speak to Hermas more gently. He said: "O fool, senseless and doubting, do you not perceive how great is the glory of God and how strong and marvellous is God in that He created the world for the sake of man, subjected to him all the creatures of God and gave him the power to rule over everything under heaven? If man is the lord of the creatures of God and rules over all, is he not able to be lord also of these commandments? The man who has the Lord in his heart can also be the lord of all and every one of his commandments. For those who have the Lord only on their lips but their hearts are hardened, who are far from the Lord - the commandments are hard and difficult. Those who are empty and fickle in their faith should know that the Lord is in their heart; they will know that there is nothing easier, sweeter or more manageable than these commandments. Those who walk in the commandments of the evil, in hard, bitter and wild licentiousness, should return and not be afraid of the devil because the devil does not have internally any power against you, for I will be with you, the angel of repentance and because I am the Lord over you. The devil has only fear but his fear has no strength. Do not fear the devil and then he will flee from you."

Chapter 5

Hermas said to him: "Sir, listen to me for a moment." He said: "Say what you wish." Hermas said: "Sir, man is eager to keep the commandments of God; there is no one who does not ask from the Lord that strength be given him for there commandments and that he may be subject to them but devil is hard and holds sway over them." He said: "We cannot hold sway over the servants of God who place their hopes in Him with al their heart. The devil can wrestle against these but he cannot overthrow them. If you resist the devil, he will be conquered and flee in disgrace from you. Many who are empty fear the devil as possessing power. The devil goes to all the servants of God to try them. Many of the servants of God have full faith, resist strongly the devil who withdraws from them having no way by which he night enter them, The devil goes to the empty; finding a way of entrance into them, he produces in them whatever he wishes and they become his servants."

Chapter 6

He said: "But I, the angel of repentance, say to you: Fear not the devil for I was sent to be with you, who repent with all your heart and make you strong in faith. Trust God! You have despaired of life on account of your sins and weigh down your life. If you return to the Lord with all your heart, practise righteousness for the rest of your days and serve Him according to His will. He will heal your formed sins and you will have power to hold away the works of the devil. Do not fear at all the threats of the devil for he is powerless as the sinews of a dead man. Give ear to me and fear Him who has all power, both to save and destroy and keep His commandments and you will live to God." Hermas said to him: "Sir, I am now made strong in all the ordinances of the Lord, because you are with me. I know that I will crush all the power of the devil and we shall have rule over him and shall prevail against all his works. I hope, sir, to be able to keep all these commandments which you have enjoined upon me, the Lord strengthening me." He said: "You will keep them if your heart be pure towards the Lord, All who cleanse their hearts from vain desires of the world will keep them and will live to God."

Book III - Similitudes

Similitudes which he spoke with me

Similitude first

As in this world we have no tolerating city, we ought to seek one to come

He says to Hermas: "You know that those who are servants of God dwell in a strange land for your city is far away from this one. You know that the city in which you are to dwell so why do you accumulate here lands, make expensive preparations, accumulate dwellings and useless buildings? He who makes such preparations for this city cannot return again to his own city. Oh foolish, unstable and miserable man, you do not understand that all these things belong to another and are under his power? The lord of this city will say: "I do not wish you to dwell in my city; depart from this city because you do not obey to my laws." Therefore, when you will casted out by him, what will you do with your land, your house and other possessions which you have gathered for yourself? The lord of this country justly says to you: "Either obey my laws or depart from my dominion." What do you intend to do, having your own law in your own city, for your lands and your other properties? You will deny altogether your law and you will walk according to the law of this city. Take care so that the denial of your own law will affect you as little as possible because you will desire to return to your city. You will not be accepted because you denied the law of your city and you will be excluded from it. Therefore, take care: as someone living in a foreign land, make only preparation which may be sufficient. When the master of this city will come to cast you out for disobeying his law, you should be ready to leave the city in great joy, to depart to your own city, to obey your own law without being exposed to annoyance. You, who serve the Lord and have Him in your heart, take care that you work the works of

God, remembering His commandments and promises He made; you should believe that He will bring them to pass, if His commandments are observed. Therefore, instead of lands, buy afflicted souls, according to the capacity of each one; visit widows and orphans and do not overlook them; spend your wealth and all your preparations which you received from the Lord upon such lands and houses. The Master made you rich so that you may perform such services unto Him. It is much better to purchase such lands, properties and houses as you will find in your country, when you come to reside there. This is a noble and sacred expenditure attended with joy and not with sorrow or fear. Do not practise the expenditure of the heathen because it is injurious to you, who are servants of God; practise an expenditure of your own, in which you can rejoice. Do not corrupt, do not touch and do not covet what belongs to another because it is evil to desire the goods of other persons. Elaborate your goods with your own work and you will be saved."

Similitude second

As Hermas was walking in the field, he saw an elm and a vine and reflected about them and their fruits. The Shepherd appeared to him and said: "What is it that you are thinking the elm as vine?" Hermas answered: "I am considering that they become each other exceedingly well. He continued: "These two trees are intended as an example for the servants of God." Hermas said: "I would like to know which example these trees are intended to teach." He asked: "Do you see the elm and the vine?" Hermas replied: "I see them, sir." He continued: "This vine produces fruit and the elm is an unfruitful tree; unless the vine is trained upon the elm, it cannot bear much fruit when extended at length upon the ground. The fruit which it does bear is rotten because the plant is not suspended upon the elm. When the vine is cast upon the elm, it yields fruit both from itself and from the elm. Therefore, when the vine is cast upon the elm, it yields fruit both from itself and from the elm. Moreover, you see that the elm also produces much fruit, no less than the vine and even more because, when suspended upon the elm, the vine yields much good fruit but when it is thrown on the ground, the vine produces small and rotten fruit. Therefore, this similitude is for the servants of God, for the poor and for the rich." Hermas said: "How so, sir? Explain me this matter." He said: "Listen, the rich man has much wealth but is poor in matters relating to the Lord because he is distracted about his riches. He offers to the Lord very few confessions and intercessions, which hare small, weak and powerless. But the rich man who refreshes the poor and helps him in his necessities believes that what he to the poor man will be able to find its reward with God because the poor man is rich in intercession and confession, which have great power with God. Thus, the rich man helps the poor in all things, without hesitation. The poor man, being helped by the rich, intercedes for him, giving thanks to God for him who bestows gifts upon him. The rich man still continues to interest himself zealously for the poor man so that his wants may be constantly supplied. He knows that the intercession of the poor man is acceptable and influential with God. Accordingly, both accomplish their work. The poor man makes intercession, a work in which he is rich, which he received from the Lord and with which he recompenses the master who helps him. Similarly, the rich man unhesitatingly bestows upon the poor man the riches which he received from the Lord. This is a great work, acceptable before God because the rich man understands the object of his wealth, has given to the poor of the gifts of the Lord and rightly discharged his service to

Him. However, among humans the elm appears not to produce fruit; humans do not know and do not understand that if draught come, the elm, which contains water, nourishes the vine and the vine, having an unfailing supply of water, yields double fruit for itself and for the elm. Similarly, also poor men, who intercede with the Lord on behalf of the rich, increase their riches; the rich, auding the poor in their necessities, satisfy their souls. Therefore, both are partners in the righteous work. He who does these things shall not be deserted by God but shall be enrolled in the books of the living. Blessed are they who have riches and understand that the riches are from the Lord."

Similitude third

As in winter green trees cannot be distinguished from withered, so in this world neither can be just from the unjust

He showed to Hermas many trees without leaves but withered and they were all alike. He said:" Do you see those trees?" Hermas replied: "I see that all are alike and withered." He answered: "The trees which you see are those which dwell in this world." Hermas said: "Sir, why then are they withered as it were and alike?" He said: "Because neither are the righteous manifest in this life, nor the sinners; they are all alike. This life is a winter to the righteous and they do not manifest themselves because they dwell with the sinners. As in winter, trees that have cast their leaves are alike and it is not seen which are dead and which are living, so in this world neither do the righteous show themselves nor sinners, but all are alike one to the other."

Similitude fourth

As in summer living trees are distinguished from withered by fruit and living leaves, so in the world to come the just differ from the unjust in happiness

He showed again to Hermas many trees, some budding and others withered. He said to Hermas: "Do you see these trees?" Hermas replied: "Sir, I see some putting forth buds and others withered." He said: "Those which are budding are the righteous who are to live in the world to come, which the summer of the righteous and the winter of the sinners. Therefore, when the mercy of the Lord shines forth, then shall they be made manifest who are the servants of God and all men shall be made manifest. As in the summer appear the fruits of each individual tree and it is ascertained of what sort they are, so also the fruits of the righteous shall be made manifest and all who have been fruitful in this world shall be made known. The heathen and sinners, like the withered trees which you saw, will be found to be those who have been withered and unfruitful in that world and shall be burnt like wood and so will be mase manifest, because their actions were evil during their lives. The sinners shall be consumed because they sinned and did not repent; the heathen will be burned because they knew not Him, who created them. Therefore, you should bear fruit so that it may be known. You should refrain from much business and you will never sin for those who are busy with much business and commit also many sins, being distracted by their affairs and not serving at all their Lord. How can someone ask and obtain anything from the Lord, if he does not serve Him? Those who serve God shall obtain their requests but those who do not

serve Him, will not receive anything. A man can serve the Lord even by a single action for his mind will not be perverted from the Lord but will serve Him, having a pure mind. Therefore, if you do these things, you shall be able to bear fruit from the life to come and every one who will do these things shall beat fruit."

Similitude fifth

Of true fasting and its reward; of the purity of the body

Chapter 1

While fasting and sitting on a certain mountain, giving thanks to the Lord for all His dealings with him, Hermas saw the Shepherd sitting down beside him. The Shepherd asked Hermas: "Why have you come here so early in the morning?" Hermas answered: "Sir, because I have a station." He asked: "What is a station?" Hermas replied: "I am fasting, sir." He continues: "What is this fasting which you are observing?" Hermas replied: "Sir, as I been accustomed, so I fast." He said: "You do not know how to fast unto the Lord; this useless fasting which you observe to Him is of no value." Hermas asked: "Sir, why do you say this?" He continued: "I say to you that the fasting which you think you observe is not a fasting. I will teach you what is full and acceptable fasting to the Lord. God does not desire such an empty fasting. Fasting to God in this way will do nothing for the righteous life but offer to God a fasting of the following kind: Do no evil in your life and serve the Lord with a pure heart; keep His commandments, walking in His precepts and let no evil desire arise in your heart and believe in God. If you do these things, fear Him and abstain from every evil thing, you will live unto God. If you do these things, you will keep a great fast, acceptable before God."

Chapter 2

"Hear the similitude which I am about to narrate to you about fasting. A certain man had a field and many slaves. He planted a certain part of the field with a vineyard; selecting a faithful and much valued slave, he called him and said: "Take this vineyard which I have planted and stake it until I come, without doing it anything else. Attend to this order of mine and you will receive your freedom from me." Then, the master of the slave moved to a foreign country. When he was gone, the slave took the vineyard and staked it. When he had finished the staking of the vines, he saw that the vineyard was full of weeds. Then, he said: "I have kept this order of my master. I will dig up the rest of the vineyard and it will be more beautiful when dug up; being free of weeds, the vineyard will yield more fruit, not being choked by them." Therefore, he took and dug up the vineyard and rooted all the weeds that were in it. That vineyard became beautiful and fruitful, without weeds to choke it. After a certain time, the master of the slave and of the field returned and entered into the vineyard, seeing that the vines were suitably supported on the stakes, the ground was dug up, all weeds were routed and the vines were fruitful. Thus, the master was greatly pleased with the work of his slave. The master of the vineyard called his beloved son, who was his heir as well as his friends who were his councillors. The master told them the orders that he

had given to his slave and what he had found performed. All rejoiced along with the slave at the testimony, which his master bore to him. He told them: "I promised freedom to this slave, if he obeyed the command I gave him. The slave executed my command and he had done besides a good work to the vineyard and he pleased me exceedingly. Therefore, in return for the work he has done, I wish to make him co - heir with my son because, having good thoughts, he did not neglect them but carried them out." The son of the master and the friends were pleased that the slave should be co - heir with the son. After a few days, the master made a feast and sent to his slave many dishes from his table. Receiving the dishes from his master, the slave kept what was sufficient for himself and shared the rest among his fellow slaves, who rejoiced the dishes received. They began to pray for him that he might find still greater favour with his master for having so treated them. His master heard all these things that were done and was again greatly pleased with his conduct. The master called again his friends and his son and told them what the slave did with the dishes he had sent him. They were still more satisfied that the slave should become co - heir with his son."

Chapter 3

Hermas said to him: "Sir, I do not see the meanings of these similitudes nor am I able to comprehend them, unless you explain them to me." He said: "I will explain them all to you and whatever I shall mention in the course of our conversations I will show you. Keep the commandments of the Lord and you will be approved and inscribed among those who observe His commands. If you do any good beyond what is commanded by God, you will gain for yourself more abundant glory and you will be more honoured by God than you would be otherwise. Therefore, if in addition to the keeping of the commandments of God, you do these things, you will have joy if you observe them according to my command." Hermas said: "Sir, whatever you enjoin upon me I will observe, for I know that you are with me." He replied: "I will be with you because you have such a desire for doing good. I will be with all those who have such a desire. This fasting is very good, provided that the commandments of the Lord are observed. Thus, you shall observe the fasting which you intend to keep. First of all, be on guard against every evil word and every evil desire; purify your heart from all the vanities of this world. If you guard against these things, your fasting will be perfect. You will also implement the following instructions. Having fulfilled what is written, on your fasting day you will taste nothing but bread and water. Having calculated the price of the dishes of that day which you intended to have eaten, you will give it to a widow, or an orphan or to some person in want and thus you will exhibit humility of mind so that he, who has received benefit from your humility, may fill his own soul and pray for you to the Lord. If you observe fasting, as I have commanded you, your sacrifice will be acceptable for God and this fasting will be written down. The service thus performed is noble, sacred and acceptable to the Lord. Therefore, these things you shall thus observe with your children and all your houses and, in observing them, you will be blessed. As many that hear these words and observe them shall be blessed and whatever they ask of the Lord they shall receive."

Chapter 4

Hermas implored him to explain the similitudes of the field, of the master of the vineyard, of the slave who staked the vineyard, of the stakes, of the plucked weeds, of the son and the fellow councillor friends, because he knew that all these were a kind of parable. He answered to Hermas: "You are exceedingly persistent with your questions. You ought not to ask any questions at all for if it is necessary to explain anything, it will be made known to you." Hermas told him: "Sir, whatsoever you show me and do not explain, I will consider purposeless as I do not understand its meaning. Similarly, if you speak parables to me and do not unfold them, I shall have heard your words in vain." He answered to Hermas again: "Every one who is a servant of God and has his Lord in his heart, asks of Him understanding, receives it and opens up every parable. The words of the Lord spoken in parables become known to him. But those who are weak and slothful in prayer hesitate to ask anything from the Lord but the Lord is full of compassion and gives without fail to all who ask Him. But you, having been strengthened by the Holy Angel and having obtained from Him such intercession, not being slothful, why do you not ask understanding of the Lord and receive it from Him?" Hermas replied: "Sir, having you with me I had the necessity to ask you questions for you show me all things and you converse with me. If I would have needed to se or hear those things without you, I would have asked the Lord to explain them."

Chapter 5

He answered: "I told you a little ago that you were cunning and obstinate in asking explanations of the parables but, since you are so obstinate, I shall unfold you the meanings of the similitudes of the field and of all the others which follow so that you make them known to everyone. Hear and understand them. The field is this world; the Lord of the field is He who created, perfected and strengthened all things; the Son is the Holy Spirit and slave is the Son of God; the vines are this people, whom He Himself planted; the stakes are the holy angels of the Lord, who keep His people together; the weeds plucked out of the vineyard are te iniquities of the servants of God; the dishes which He sent Him from His table are the commandments which He gave to His people through His Son; the friends and the fellow - councillors are the holy angels who were first created; the Master’s absence from home is the time that remains until His appearance." Hermas told him: "Sir, all these are great, marvellous and glorious things. Therefore, could I understand them? No, nor could any other man, even if exceedingly wise. Moreover, explain to me what am I about to ask you." He replied: "Say what you wish." Hermas asked: "Sir, why is the Son of God in the parable in the form of a slave?"

Chapter 6

He answered: "Hear: the Son of God is not in the form of a slave but in great power and might." Hermas answered: "How so, sir? I do not understand." He answered: "Because the Lord planted the vineyard, that is to say, He created the people ang gave them to His Son; the Son appointed his angels over them. He Himself purged away their sins, having suffered many trials, without labour and toil. Then He Himself, having purged away the sins of the people, showed them the paths of life by giving them the law which He received from His Father. Listen why the Lord took His son as councillor and the glorious angels, regarding the heirship

of the slave. The holy, pre - existent Spirit, that created every creature, God made to dwell in flesh, which He chose. Accordingly, this flesh, in which the Holy Spirit dwelt, was nobly subject to that Spirit, walking religiously and chastely, in no respect defiling the Spirit. Accordingly, after living excellently and purely after labouring and co - operating with the Spirit and after having in every thing and after having in every thing acted rigorously and courageously along with the Holy Spirit, He assumed it as a partner. This conduct of the flesh pleased Him, because it was not defiled on the earth while having the Holy Spirit. Therefore, he took as fellow - councillors His Son and the glorious angels. The purpose was that this flesh, which had been subject to the body faultlessly, might have some place of tabernacle and that it might not appear that the reward of its servitude had been lost for the flesh that has been found without spot or defilement, in which the Holy Spirit dwelt, will receive a reward. Now, you have also the explanation of this parable."

Chapter 7

Hermas said: "I rejoice to hear this explanation." He replied: "Keep this flesh pure and stainless, that the Spirit which inhabits it may bear witness to it and your flesh may be justified. Take care so that in your mind arises the idea that this flesh of yours is corruptible and you misuse it by any act of defilement. If you defile your flesh and spirit, you will not live." Hermas said: "Sir, if anyone has been hitherto ignorant, before he heard these words, how can such a man be saved who has defiled his flesh?" He said: "Respecting former sins of ignorance, God alone is able to heal them, for to Him belongs all power. But, be on your guard now and the all - powerful and compassionate God will heal former transgression, if for the true to come you do not defile your body or your spirit; for both are common and cannot be defiled one without the other. Therefore, keep both pure and you will live unto God."

Similitude sixth

Of the two classes of voluptuous men, on their death, falling away and the duration of their punishment

Chapter 1

Hermas was sitting in his house, glorifying the Lord for all he had seen, reflecting that the commandments are excellent, powerful, glorious and capable to save the human soul. Hermas told to himself: "I shall be blessed if I walk in these commandments and every one who walks in these commandments will be blessed." Hermas suddenly saw him (i.e. - the shepherd) beside him and heard him say: "Why are you in doubt about the commandments which I gave you? They are excellent: have no doubt at all about them but put on faith in the Lord and walk within them, for I will strengthen you in them. These commandments are beneficial to those who intend to repent for, if you do not walk in them, their repentance is in vain. Therefore, you who repent, cast away the wickedness of this world which wears you out; by putting on all the virtues of a holy life, you will be able to keep these commandments and you will not add to your sins. Therefore, walk in these

commandments of mine and you will live unto God. All these things have been spoken to you by me." Afterwards, he said to Hermas: "Let us go into the fields and I will show the shepherds of the flocks." Hermas said: "Let us go, sir." They came to a certain place, where he showed to Hermas a young shepherd, clothed in a suit of yellow garments, who was herding vey many sheep, feeding luxuriously, riotously, and merrily, skipping from one place to another. The shepherd was merry because of his flock and his appearance was joyous.

Chapter 2

He asked Hermas: "Do you see this shepherd?" Hermas answered: "I see him, sir." He continued: "This is the angel of luxury and deceit: he wears out the souls of the servants of God and perverts them from the truth, deceiving them with wicked desires, through which they will perish; they forget the commandments of the living God, they walk in deceits and empty luxuries; they are ruined by the angel, some being brought to death, others to corruption." Hermas told him: "Sir, I do not know the meaning of these words "to death" and "to corruption."" He said: "Listen, the sheep which you saw merry and leaping about are those which have torn themselves away from God for ever and have delivered themselves over to the luxuries and deceits of this world. Among them, there is no return to life through repentance because they have added to their other sins and blasphemed the name of the Lord. Therefore, such men are appointed unto to death. The sheep which you saw not leaping but feeding in one place are those who have delivered themselves over to luxury and deceit but have committed no blasphemy against the Lord. These have been perverted from the truth: among them there is no hope of repentance, by which it is possible to live. Corruption has a hope of a kind of renewal but death has everlasting ruin." Again, Hermas went a little forward and showed him a tall shepherd, somewhat savage in his appearance, clothed in a white goat -skin with branches, having a wallet on his shoulders and a large whip. He had a very sour look and his aspect was so forbidding that Hermas became afraid of him. Accordingly, the shepherd was receiving from the young shepherd those sheep that were rioting and luxuriating but not leaping. He cast them into a precipitous place, full of thistles and thorns, so that it was impossible to extricate them from there. The sheep were thus entangled, pastured among the thistles and thorns and beaten by him; he drove hither and tither and gave them no rest. Altogether, these sheep were in wretched plight.

Chapter 3

Hermas was grieved seeing the sheep beaten, badly treated, tormented and completely restless. Hermas said to the shepherd who talked with him: "Sir, who is the shepherd who is so pitiless, severe and devoid of compassion for his sheep?" He replied: "This is the angel of punishment; he belongs to the just angels and is appointed to punish. Accordingly, he takes those who wonder from God and who have walked in the desires and the deceits of this world and chastises them as they deserve with terrible and diverse punishments." Hermas asked: "I would know of what nature are these diverse tortures and punishments?"
He said: "Hear the various tortures and punishments. The tortures are such as occur during life. Some are punished with loses, others with want, others with sickness of various kinds, others with kinds of disorder and confusion; others are

insulted by unworthy persons and exposed to suffering in many other ways. Many, becoming unstable in their plans, try many things and none of them succeed at all. They say that they are not prosperous in their undertakings. It does not occur to their mind that they have done evil deeds but they blame the Lord. Therefore, when they have suffered from different kinds of afflictions, they were delivered to me for good training and they are made strong in their faith of the Lord. When they begin to repent of their sins, the works in which they have exercised themselves arise in their hearts and then they honour God, saying that He is a just judge and that they have deservedly suffered everything according to their deeds. They are subject to the Lord for the rest of the days of their life, with pure hearts; they are successful in all their undertakings, obtaining from the Lord everything they ask. Then, they glorify the Lord that they were delivered to me and no longer suffer any evil."

Chapter 4

Hermas said to him: "Sir, explain this also to me." He said: "What is it you ask?" Hermas continued: "Sir, my question is whether those who indulge in luxury and who are deceived, are tortures for the same period of time that they have indulged in luxury and deceit?" He answered to Hermas: "They are torturedin the same manner for from those who are luxurious and who forgot God ought to be tortured seven - fold. You are foolish and do not understand the power of torment." Hermas said: "Why, sir? If I understand it, I would not have asked you to show me." He said: "Hear the power of both. The time of luxury and deceit is one hour but the hour of torment is equivalent to thirty days. Accordingly, if a man indulges in luxury for one day and he was deceived and tortured for one day, the day of his torture is equivalent to a whole year. All the days of luxury are as many years of torture to be undergone. You see then that the time of luxury and deceit is very short but the time of punishment and torture is long."

Chapter 5

Hermas said: "I still do not quite understand about the time of deceit, luxury and torture; explain it to me more clearly." He answered: "Your folly is persistent; you do not wish to purify your heart and serve God. Have a care, lest the time be fulfilled and you will be found foolish. Hear now as you desire, so that you may understand these things. He who indulges in luxury and is deceived for one day and who does what he wishes, is to be clothed with much foolishness and does not understand the act which he does until tomorrow for he forgets what he did the previous day. Luxury and deceit have no memories, on account of the folly with which they are clothed. When punishment and torture cleave to a man for one day, he is punished and tortured for one year because punishment and torture have powerful memories. Therefore, while tortured and punished for a whole year, he remembers at last his luxury and deceit and knows that he suffers evil on their account. Therefore, every man who is luxurious and deceived is thus tormented because, although having life, they have given themselves over to death." Hermas asked: "Sir, what kinds of luxury are hurtful?" He replied: "Every act which man

performs with pleasure is an act of luxury. When he gratifies his tendency, the sharp - tempered man indulges in luxury; the adulterer, the drunkard, the backbiter, the liar, the covetous and the thief as well as he who commits similar acts, gratifies his peculiar propensity and thus indulges in luxury. All these acts of luxury are hurtful to the servants of God. Therefore, on account of these deceits suffer those who are punished and tortured. There are also acts of luxury which save men for many who do good indulge in luxury, being carried away by their own pleasure. However, this luxury is beneficial to the servants of God and gains life for such a man. However, the injurious acts of luxury previously mentioned bring tortures and punishment upon them; if they continue in these acts of luxury and do not repent, they bring death upon themselves."

Similitude seventh

They who repent must bring forth fruits worthy of repentance

After a few days, Hermas saw the shepherd in the same place as before. He said to Hermas: "What do you wish with me?" Hermas answered: "Sir, I wish that you order the shepherd who punishes to depart out of my house because he afflicts me exceedingly." He replied: "It is necessary that you be afflicted. This is the command of the glorious angel concerning you, as he wishes that you be tried." Hermas said: "Sir, what have I done which is so bad that I should be delivered to this angel?" He said: "Listen, your sins are numerous but not so great as to require that you be delivered over to this angel. Your house has committed great iniquities and sins and the glorious angel has been incensed at them on account of their deeds. For this reason, the glorious angel he commended you to be afflicted for a certain time, that they also might repent and purify themselves from every desire of this world. Therefore, when they repent and are purified, the angel of punishment will depart." Hermas said to him: "Sir, if you have done such things as to incense the glorious angel against them, yet what have I done?" He replied: "they cannot be afflicted at all unless you, the head of the house, be afflicted for, when you are afflicted, they necessarily also suffer afflictions. If you are in comfort, they can feel no affliction." Hermas said: "Well, sir, they have repented with their whole heart." He answered: " I know too that they have repented with their whole heart. However, do you think that the sins of those who repent are remitted? Not altogether, but he who repents must torture his own soul and be exceedingly humble in all his conduct and be afflicted with many kinds of affliction. If he endures the afflictions that come upon him, the Creator of the universe who endured them with power will assuredly have compassion and will heal him. He will do this when He sees the heart of every penitent pure from every evil thing. It is profitable for you and for your house to suffer now affliction. But why should I say much to you? You must be afflicted as that angel of the Lord commanded and who delivered you to me. For this you should give thanks to the Lord because He had deemed you worthy of showing you in advance this affliction so that, by knowing it before it comes, you may be able to bear it with courage." Hermas said to him: "Sir, please, be with me and I will be able to bear all affliction." He said: "I will be with you and I will ask the angel of punishment to afflict you more lightly; nevertheless, you will be afflicted for a little time and you will be reestablished again in your house. Only continue humble and serve the Lord in all purity of heart you, your children and your house and walk in my commandments which I enjoin

upon you and your repentance will be deep and pure. If you observe these things with your household, every affliction will depart from you. Affliction will depart from all who walk in these commandments of mine."

Similitude eighth

The sins of the elect and of the penitent are of many kinds but all will be rewarded according to the measure of their repentance and good works

Chapter 1

He showed Hermas a large willow tree, overshadowing plains and mountains. Under the shade of this willow were assembled all those were called by the name of the Lord. A glorious and very tall angel of the Lord was standing beside the willow, holding a large pruning - knife, cutting little twigs from the willow and distributing them to the people overshadowed by the willow. The twigs which he gave them were small, about a cubit in length. After they received the twigs, the angel laid down the pruning - knife and the tree was sound, as Hermas had seen it at first. Hermas marvelled within himself saying: "How is the tree sound, after so many branches had been cut off?" The shepherd told him: "Do not be surprised if the tree remains sound after so many branches were lopped off; when you shall have seen everything, then it will be explained to you what it means." The angel who distributed the branches among the people asked the branches from the people in the order in which they received them, when they were summoned to him. Each of them returned his branch. The angel of the Lord took the branches and looked at them. The angel of the Lord received from some branches withered and moth - eaten. He ordered those who returned such branches to stand apart. Others returned the branches withered but not moth - eaten and the angel of the Lord ordered those who returned such branches to stand apart. Others returned their branches green, having cracks in them; these stood apart. Others returned their branches green half withered and half green and they also stood apart. Others brought their branches two - thirds green and the remaining third withered; these stood apart. Others returned branches which were two - thirds withered and one third green; these stood apart. Others returned their branches nearly all green, the smallest part, the top, being withered but having cracks in them. These also stood apart. Others came bringing their branches green, as they received them from the angel. The majority of the crowd returned branches of this kind and the angel was exceedingly pleased with these, who stood apart. Others returned their branches green and with offshoots, which had some fruit. These people were exceedingly joyful. The angel was exultant because of them and the Shepherd also greatly rejoiced because of them.

Chapter 2

The angel of the Lord ordered to be brought crowns and there were brought crowns made of palms.
He crowned the men who had returned the branches which had offshoots and some fruit and sent them away into the tower. He also sent to the tower those who had returned green branches offshoot but fruitless, having given them seals. All

those who went into the tower were clothed in white as snow. Those who returned their branches green, as they have received them, he set free, giving them clothing and seals. After he finished these things, he said to the shepherd: "I am going away and you will send these away within the walls according to what each is worthy to have his dwelling. Examine carefully their branches and so dismiss them. See that no one escape you. If any one escape you, I will try them at the altar." Having said these words to the Shepherd, he departed. After the departure of the angel, the Shepherd said to Hermas: "Let us take the branches of all these and plant them and see if they will live." Hermas said to him: "Sir, how can these withered branches live?" He answered: "This tree is a willow of a kind tenacious of life. Therefore, if the branches be planted and receive a little moisture, many of them will live. And now, let us try and pour water upon them. If any of them shall live, I shall rejoice with them; if they do not live, at least I will not be found neglectful." The shepherd bade Hermas to call them as each one was placed. And they came, rank by rank, and gave their branches to the Shepherd, who received them and planted them in rows. Afterwards, he poured much water upon them so that the branches could not be seen. After the branches had drunk the water, he said to Hermas: "Let us go and return after a few days and inspect all the branches for He, who created this tree, wishes all those to live who received branches from it. I also hope that the greater part of these branches, which received moisture and drank of the water, will live."

Chapter 3

Hermas told him: "Sir, explain to me what this tree means, for I am perplexed about because it continues sound and nothing appears to have been cut away from it, after so many branches have been cut off. I am perplexed by it now." He said: "Listen, this great tree that casts its shadow over plains, mountains and all the earth, is the law of God that was given to the whole world. This law is the Son of Lae, proclaimed to the ends of the earth. The people who are under its shadow are they who have heard the proclamation and have believed upon Him. The great and glorious angel Michael is he who has authority over this people and govern them. For this, he gave them the clan in the hearts of the believers. Accordingly, you see many branches that have been rendered useless and you will know them all - those who have not kept the law; you will see the dwelling of each one." Hermas asked: "Sir, why did he dismiss some into the tower and left others to you?" He answered: "All who transgressed the law which they received from him, he left under my power for repentance; all who have satisfied the law and kept it, he retains under his authority." Hermas continued: "Who, then, are they who have suffered on account of the law, but the others and they who returned their branches green and with offshoots but without fruit, are they who have been afflicted on account of the law but who have not suffered nor decried their law; and they who returned their branches green as they received them are the venerable and the just and they who have walked carefully in a pure heart and have kept the commandments of the Lord. You will know the rest when I have examined these branches which have been planted and watered."

Chapter 4

After several days, we came to the place: the Shepherd sat in the place of the angel and Hermas stood beside him. He said to Hermas: "Gird yourself with pure, undressed linen made of sackcloth." Seeing that Hermas girded and ready to minister to him, he said: "Summon the men to whom belong the branches that were planted, according to the order in which each one gave to them in." So, Hermas went away to the plain and summoned them all and they all stood in their ranks. He told them: "Let each one pull out his own branch and bring it to me." The first to give in were those who had them withered and cut; because they were found to be thus withered and cut, he commanded them to stand apart. Next, they gave them in who had been withered but not cut. Some of them gave in their branches green and some withered and eaten as by moth. To those who gave green branches, he ordered to stand apart. He also ordered those who gave dry and cut branches to stand along the first. Next, they gave them in who had then half - withered and cracked branches; many gave them in green and without cracks and some green with offshoots and fruits, like those who went into the tower. Some handed them withered and eaten, some were withered and uneaten and some were half - withered and cracked. He commanded each of them to stand apart, some towards their own rows and others apart from them.

Chapter 5

Then, those who had green cracked branches, gave in the green and stood in their own row. The Shepherd was pleased because all were changed and lost their cracks. They gave in the branches which were half - green and half withered, completely green, half withered or withered and eaten and green with offshoots. All these were sent away, each to his own row. They also gave branches which were two thirds green and one third withered, half withered or entirely rotten, half withered and cracked as well as a few green. All these stood in their own row. They gave green branches but to a slight extent withered and crocked. They gave some of these in green and others with offshoots. All these also went to their own row. Next, they gave those which had a small part green while the other parts were withered. Most of these branches were green, having offshoots and fruits upon the offshoot while others were altogether green. The Shepherd was exceedingly pleased with these branches because they were found in this state. All these went away, each to his own row.

Chapter 6

After he examined their branches, the Shepherd said to Hermas: "I told you that this tree was tenacious of life. You see how many repented and were saved." Hermas answered: "I see, sir." The Shepherd added: "It is great and glorious that you may behold the great mercy of the Lord and that He has given His Spirit to those who are worthy of repentance." Hermas said: "Sir, why then all these did not repent?" He answered: "He gave power to repent with the whole heart to those whose heart He saw that it would become pure and obedient to Him. But those whose deceit and wickedness he perceived and saw that they intended to repent hypocritically, He did not grant repentance, lest they should again profane His name." Hermas told him: "Sir, show me now, with respect to those who gave in the branches, of what sort they are and their abode, in order that they hear who believed and received the seal, and broke it, and did not keep it whole, may, on

coming to a knowledge of their deeds, repent and receive from you a seal and may glorify the Lord because He had compassion upon them and sent you to renew their spirits. The Shepherd said: "Listen, those whose branches were found withered and moth - eaten are the apostates and traitors of the church, who have blasphemed the Lord in their sins and have been shamed of the name of the Lord by which they were called. Therefore, at the end of these they were lost unto God. You see that not a single one of them repented, although they heard the words which I spoke to them, which I have enjoined upon. From such life departed. Those who put them in a withered and undecayed state of things were also near to them; they were hypocrites, introducers of strange doctrines and subverters of the servants of God., especially of those who have sinned, not allowing them to repent but persuading them by foolish doctrines. Accordingly, these have a hope of repentance. You see that many of them also have repented since I spoke to them and still will repent. But all who will not repent have lost their lives. Many of those who repented became good and their dwelling was appointed within the first walls. Some of them ascended even into the tower. You see that repentance involves life to sinners but non - repentance involves death."

Chapter 7

He continued: "Hear also about the many who gave in the branches half - withered and cracked. Those whose branches were half - withered to the same extent are the wavering for they do not live and they are not dead. Those who have them half - withered and cracked are both waverers and slanderers, never having peace with one another but always at variance. Yet, repentance is also available for these. You see that some of them have repented and there is still a hope of repentance in them. As many of them have repented, they still have their dwelling in the tower. Those of them who have been slower in repenting shall dwell within the walls. Those who do not repent at all but abide in their deeds, shall utterly perish. Those who gave in their branches green and cracked were always faithful and good, though emulous of each other about the foremost places and about fame: now, all these are foolish in indulging in such a rivalry. Yet, hearing my comments and being naturally good, they purified themselves and soon repented. Accordingly, their dwelling was in the tower. If anyone relapse into strife, he will be cast out of the tower and will lose his life which is the property of all who keep the commandments of the Lord in which there is no rivalry concerning the first places or glory of any kind but only in regard to patience and personal humility. Therefore, among such persons is the life of the Lord but among the quarrelsome and transgressors is death."

Chapter 8

"And they who gave in their branches half green and half withered, are those who are immersed in business and do not cleave to the saints. For this reason, half are still alive and half are dead. Accordingly, many who heard my commands repented and at least they had their dwellings in the tower. Some of them at last fell away. Accordingly, these have no repentance for on account of their business they blasphemed the Lord and denied Him. Therefore, they lost their lives through the wickedness which they committed. Many of them doubted. They still have repentance in their power, if they repent speedily and their abode will be in the

tower. If they are slower in repenting, they will dwell within the walls; if they do not repent, they too have lost their lives. Those who gave in their branches which were two - thirds withered and one - third green, are those who have denied the Lord in various ways. However, many repented but some of them hesitated and were in doubt. These have repentance within their reach, if they repent quickly and do not remain in their pleasures but if they abide in their deeds, these too work to themselves death."

Chapter 9

"The faithful indeed are those who returned their branches two - thirds withered and one - third green. After they acquired wealth and became distinguished among the heathen, they clothed themselves with great pride and became lofty - minded, deserted the truth and did not cleave to the righteous but lived with the heathen and this mode of life became more agreeable to them. However, they did not depart from God but remains in the faith, although mot working the works of faith. Accordingly, many of them continues to live until the end with the heathen. Corrupted by their useless glories, they departed from God, serving the works and deeds of the heathen. These were reckoned with the heathen. Others hesitated, not hoping to be saved on account of their deeds; others were doubtful and caused divisions among themselves. Thus, for those who were in doubt about their own deeds, repentance is still open but their repentance ought to be speedy so that their dwelling may be in the tower. Foe those who do not repent but abide to their pleasures, death is near."

Chapter 10

"They who gave in their branches green, having the tips withered and cracked, were always good, faithful and distinguished before God. They sinned very little by indulging small desires and finding little faults with one another. On hearing my words, their greater part repented quickly and their dwelling was upon the tower. Yet, some of them were in doubt and some of these in doubt wrought greater dissension. Therefore, among these is hope of repentance because they were always good and any of them will perish difficultly. Those who gave up their branches withered but having a very small green part are those who believed only, but still continued the works of iniquity. However, they never departed from God but gladly bore His name and joyfully received His servants into their houses. Having heard of this repentance, they unhesitatingly repented and practise all virtue and righteousness. Some of them even suffered, being willingly put to death. You should know their deeds. Therefore, the dwelling of these shall be in the tower."

Chapter 11

After he has finished the explanation of all the branches, the Shepherd said to Hermas: "Go and tell to every one that they may repent and they shall live unto God. The Lord had confession for all men and sent me to give repentance, although some are not worthy of that on account of their works. The Lord, being long - suffering, desires those who were called by His Son to be saved." Hermas told him: "Sir, I hope that all who have heard them will repent. I am persuaded that each

one, on coming to a knowledge of his own works and fearing the Lord, will repent." He answered to Hermas: "All who shall purify themselves with their whole heart from their wickedness before enumerated, and shall add no more to their sins, will receive healing from the Lord for their former transgression, if they do not hesitate at these commandments and they will live unto God. But you walk in my commandments and live." Having shown to Hermas these things and having spoken all these words, the Shepherd said to Hermas: "And the rest I will show you after a few days."

Similitude ninth

The great mysteries in the building of the militant and triumphant Church

Chapter 1

After Hermas had written down the commandments and similitudes of the Shepherd, the angel of repentance, he came to Hermas and said: "I wish to explain to you what the Holy Spirit that spoke with you in the form of the Church showed you, for that Spirit is the Son of God. As you were somewhat weak in the flesh, it was not explained to you by the angel. However, when you were strengthened by the Spirit, and your strength was increased, so that you were strengthened by the Spirit, so that you may see the angel, then accordingly was strengthened the building of the tower shown to you by the Church. In a noble and solemn manner, you saw everything as if shown you by a virgin. Now you see the same things through the same Spirit as if shown by an angel. I was sent for this purpose by the glorious angel to dwell in your house, that you might see all things with power, entertain no fear, even as it was before." The Shepherd led Hermas into Arcadia to a round hill, placed him on top of the hill and showed him a large plain and around it twelve mountains, each having a different form. The first was black as soot; the second was bare, without grass; the third was full of thorns and thistles; the fourth had half - withered grass, the upper parts of the plants were green but near the roots they were withered and some of the grasses became withered when the sun scorched them; the fifth mountain had green grass and was rugged; the sixth mountain was quite full of small and large clefts which were grassy but the plants were not very vigorous but rather decayed; the seventh mountain had cheerful pastures and the whole mountain was blooming and every kind of cattle and birds were feeding upon; the more the cattle and birds ate, the more the grass of that mountain flourished. The eighth mountain was full of mountains and every kind of Lord’s creatures drank of the fountains of this mountain. The ninth mountain had no water at all and was a desert on the whole and had within deadly serpents which destroy humans. The tenth mountain had very large trees and was completely shaded; under the shadow of the trees, sheep lay resting and ruminating. The eleventh mountain was very thickly wooded and those trees were productive, being adorned with various sorts of fruits so that anyone would desire to eat them. The twelfth mountain was entirely white, its aspect was cheerful and the mountain itself was very beautiful.

Chapter 2

The Shepherd showed Hermas, in the middle of the plain, a large white rock which had arose out of the plain. The rock was more lofty than the mountains; it had a rectangular shape so as to be capable to contain the whole world. This gate was old with a gate cut out of it which seemed done recently to Hermas. The gate glittered to such a degree under the beams of the sun that Hermas was marvelled by its splendour. Around the gate were standing twelve virgins. All the virgins were distinguished but the four virgins who were standing at the four parts of the gate seemed more distinguished. They were clothed with linen tunics and were gracefully girded, having their right shoulder exposed as if they were to bear some burden. They stood ready for they were exceedingly cheerful and eager. Hermas was marvelled within himself because he was beholding great and glorious sights. Hermas was perplexed by the virgins because, although so delicate, they were courageously standing as if to carry the whole heavens. The Shepherd told Hermas: "Why are you reasoning in yourself, perplexing your mind and distressing yourself? Do not attempt to comprehend things which you cannot understand as if you were wise. Ask the Lord so that you may receive understanding and know these things. You cannot see what is behind you but you can see what id before you. Therefore, whatever you cannot see, let alone and do not torment yourself about it. But make yourself master of what you see and do not waste your labour about other things. I will explain to you everything that I show you. Therefore, look at the things that remain."

Chapter 3

Hermas saw six men coming, tall, distinguished and similar in appearance, who summoned a multitude of men. Those who came were also tall, handsome and powerful. The six men commanded them to build a tower above the rock. The men who came to build the tower made great noise as they ran around the gate. The virgins who stood around the gate told the men to hasten the building of the tower. The virgins had spread out their hands as if they were about to receive something from the men. The six men commanded stones to ascend out of certain pit and to go to the building of the tower. Ten shinning rectangular stones went up. The six men called the virgins and bade them to carry the stones intended for the building, to pass through the gates and give them to the men who were about to build the tower. The virgins put one upon the other the ten stones which has ascended from the pot and carried them together, each stone by itself.

Chapter 4

As they stood around the gate, those who seemed strong carried the stones and stooped down under the corners of the stone; the others stooped down under the sides of the stone. Thus, they carried all the stones through the gate, as they were commanded and gave them to the men for the tower, who took the stones and proceeded with the building. The tower was built upon the great rock and above the gate. Those ten stones were prepared as the foundation for the building of the tower. The rock and the gate were the support of the whole tower. After the ten stones, another twenty came out of the pit and these were fitted into the building of the tower, being carried by virgins as before. After these, 35 stones ascended and these were fitted similarly into the tower. Afterwards, another forty stones came up and all were casted into the building of the tower. There were four rows in

the foundation of the tower and they ceased to ascend from the pit. The builders also ceased for a little. Again, the six men commanded the multitude of the crowd to bear stones from the mountains for the building of the tower. Men brought from the mountain stones of various colours and gave them to the virgins, who carried them through the gate and gave them further for the building of the tower. The stones of different colours were placed in the building and became white alike and lost their different colours. Men gave certain stones for the building but these did not become shining and remained as they were found and as they were placed. The reason was that these stones were not given by the virgins nor carried through the gate. Therefore, these stones were not in keeping with the others in the building of the tower. The six men saw these unsuitable stones in the building and commanded that these should be taken away and carried down to the place whence they had been taken. The six men told the men who brought the stones: "Do not bring any stones at all for the building but lay them down beside the tower, that the virgins may carry them through the gate and may give them for the building." They said: "Unless the stones are carried through the gate by the hands of the virgins, they cannot change their colour. Therefore, do not toil to no purpose."

Chapter 5

On that day, the building was finished but not the tower, due to a cessation. The six men commanded all the builders to withdraw at a little distance and rest but enjoined the virgins not to withdraw from the tower. Apparently, the virgins had been left to guard the tower. After they all had withdrawn and they were resting, Hermas said to the Shepherd: "What is the reason that the building of the tower was not finished?" He answered: "The tower cannot be finished just yet until the Lord of it comes and examines the building, so that if any of the stones will be found to be decayed, He may change them since the tower is built according to His pleasure." Hermas said: "Sir, I would like to know what is the meaning of the building of this tower, of this tower, of the rock and of the gate, of the mountains of the virgins, of the stones ascended from the pit and were not hewn but became as they were for the building. In the first place, why were ten stones placed in the foundation, then twenty - five, then thirty - five and then forty? I also wish to know about the stones that went to the building and were again taken out and returned to their own place? Sir, put my mind to rest on all these points and explain them to me." He replied: "If you are not found to be curious about trifles, you shall know everything. For after a few days, we shall come hither and you will see the other things that happen to this tower and you will know accurately all the similitudes." After a few days, we came where we sat down. The Shepherd said to Hermas: "Let us go to the tower for the master of the tower is coming to examine it." We came to the tower no one was near it, except the virgins. The Shepherd asked the virgins if, per chance, the master of the tower had come; they replied that he was about to come to examine the building.

Chapter 6

After a short time, Hermas saw an array of many people and in the midst of them one man of remarkable dimensions. Around this man were the six men who had worked on the building as well as many honourable persons. The virgins who kept the tower ran forward, kissed him and began to walk near him around the

tower. This man examined the building carefully, feeling separately every place. Holding a rod in his hand, he struck three times every stone in the building. The struck stones of the building decayed in the following forms: some became black, some appeared as if covered with scabs, some cracked, some were mutilated, some were not black or white, some were rough and different and some had many stains. He ordered that all these stones to be taken out of the tower and laid down beside it. He also ordered that other stones should be brought for replacement of the old. He did not command that the new stones should be brought from the mountains but bade them that new stones should be brought from a certain near plain which was dug up. Shining rectangular stones as well as some round stones were found. All the stones found were brought and carried through the gate of the virgins. The rectangular stones were hewn and placed instead the stones which were taken away. The round stones were not placed in the building because it was difficult to cut them and seemed to slowly yield to the chisel. However, the rounded stones were deposited beside the tower, as if it was intended to hew them and use them in the building, because they were exceedingly brilliant.

Chapter 7

The glorious man, the lord of the whole tower, having finished all these alterations, called the Shepherd, delivered him all the rejected stones from beside the tower and said to him: "Clean carefully all these stones and put aside for the building of the tower as may be in harmony with the other stones and throw far away from the tower those which are not in harmony with the tower." Having given these orders to the Shepherd, he departed from the tower together with all those with whom he had come. The virgins were now standing around the tower, keeping it. Hermas told to the Shepherd: "Can these stones return to the building of the tower, after they were rejected?" He asked: "Do you see these stones?" Hermas replied: "I see them, sir." He said: "I will hew the greater part of these stones and I will put them into the building and they will harmonize with the others." Hermas asked: "Sir, how can these stone harmonize after being cut all about and filled up with the same space?" He answered: "Those that shall be found small will be thrown into the middle of the building; those that are larger, will be placed outside and they will hold together." Having said that, the Shepherd told Hermas: "Let us go and, after two days, let us come and clean these stones and cast them into the building for all things around the tower must be cleaned, lest the Master comes suddenly and finds dirty places around the tower and thus will be displeased so that those stones will not be returned for the building of the tower and I also shall seem to be neglectful towards the Master." After two days, we came to the tower and the Shepherd told Hermas:
"Let us examine all the stones and ascertain those which may return to the building." Hermas said: "Sir, let us examine them!"

Chapter 8

First, he examined the black stones which remained unchanged from when they had been taken out of the building. The Shepherd ordered that these black stones to be removed out of the tower and placed apart. Next, he examined the stones which had scabs; he hewed many of these and commanded the virgins to cast them into the building. The virgins lifted them up and put them in the middle of the

building of the tower. He ordered the rest to be laid down beside the black stones. Then, he examined the stones which had cracks; he hewed many and commanded that these will be carried to the building by the virgins. These stones were placed on the external side of the building because they were found sounder than the others. Due to the large number of cracks, the rest of the stones could not be hewn and were rejected from the building of the tower. Next, he examined the chipped stones; many of these were found to be black and some had great cracks. He commanded that these stones should be laid down along with those which had been rejected. He commanded that the remaining stones to be placed in the building, after being cleaned and hewn. The virgins took them up and fitted them in the middle of the tower, because they were somewhat weak. He next examined the stones which were half white and half black; many were found to be black. He commanded these also to be taken away, along with those rejected. The rest of the stones was taken away by the virgins who fitted them into the building. These stones were placed outside because they were found to be sound and they were able to support the stone placed in the middle, since not even a part of them was chipped. He next examined the stones which were rough and hard. Some of these were rejected because they could not be hewn, as they were exceedingly hard. The rest of the stones was hewn, as they were exceedingly hard. The rest of them was hewn, carried by the virgins and fitted into the middle of the tower, because they were somewhat weak. He next examined the stones which had stains; few of these were black and were thrown aside from the others. It was found that most of the stones were bright and were fitted into the building by the virgins but, on account of their strength, were placed on the outside.

Chapter 9

Next, the Shepherd came to Hermas to examine the white and rounded stones. The Shepherd said to Hermas: "What are we to do with these stones?" Hermas replied: "How do I know, sir?" He said to Hermas: "Have you no intention regarding them?" Hermas answered: "Sir, I am not acquainted with this art, neither am I a stone - cutter, nor can I tell." He said: Do you not see that they are exceedingly round? If I wish to make them rectangular, a large portion of them must be cut away; some of them necessarily must be put into the building." Hermas said: "If they must, why do you torment yourself and you do not choose those which you prefer for the building and put them into it?" He selected the larger and shining the stones and hewed them; the virgins carried and fitted them into the external parts of the building. The remaining stones were carried away and laid down on the plain from which they were brought. However, these parts were not rejected because, he said, "there remains yet a little addition to be built to the tower and the lord of this tower wishes that all the stones to be fitted into the building, because they are extremely bright." Twelve women were called, very beautiful, clothed on black and with dishevelled hair. To Hermas, these women seemed to be fierce. The Shepherd commanded them to lift the stones which were rejected from the building and to carry away to the mountains from which they had been brought. The virgins were merry and carried away all the stones and put them in the place from which they had been taken. After the removal of all stones from around the tower, he said: "Let us go round the tower and see lest there be any defect in it." So, Hermas went along with the Shepherd who, seeing that the tower was beautifully built, rejoined exceedingly. The tower was so beautifully built

that, on seeing it, Hermas coveted its building for it was constructed as if built of one stone, which seemed as if hewn out of the rock, appearing to Hermas as a monolith.

Chapter 10

Hermas was full of joy when he walked with the Shepherd, beholding so many excellent things. The Shepherd said to Hermas: "Go and bring uncondensed lime and fine - baked clay, that I may feel the forms of the stones that were taken and thrown into the building, for everything about the tower must be smoother." Hermas executed the orders and brought to the Shepherd the objects which he was requested. The Shepherd said: "Assist me and the work will soon be finished." Accordingly, he filled up the forms of the stones that were returned to the building and commanded that the places around the tower to be swept and cleaned. The virgins took brooms, swept the place, carried all the dirt out of the tower and brought water. The ground around the tower became cheerful and very beautiful. The Shepherd told Hermas: "Everything has been cleared away; if the lord of power comes to inspect it, he can have no fault to find with us." Having spoken these words, he wished to depart. Hermas held him by the wallet and began to adjure him by the Lord that he would explain what he had shown him. The Shepherd said: "I must rest a little and then I shall explain to you everything; wait for me until I return." Hermas told him: "Sir, what can I do here alone?" The Shepherd said: "You are not alone for the virgins are with you." Hermas replied: "Then give me in charge to them." The Shepherd called the virgins and said: "I entrust him to you until I come." and went away. Hermas was alone with the virgins who were rather merry but were friendly with him, especially the four distinguished of them.

Chapter 11

The virgins said to Hermas: "The Shepherd does not come here today." Hermas said: "What, then, am I to do?" The virgins replied: "Wait for him until he comes; if he comes, he will converse with you and if he does not come, you will remain here, with us, until he does come." Hermas told them: "I will wait for him until it is late; if he does not arrive, I will go away into the house and come back early in the morning." The virgins answered: "You were entrusted to us; you cannot get away from us." Hermas replied: "Where then am I to remain?" The virgins replied: "You will sleep with us as a brother, not as a husband, for you are our brother and for the time to come we intend to abide with you, for we love you exceedingly!" Hermas was ashamed to remain with them. The virgin who seemed to be the first of them began to kiss Hermas. Seeing that, the other virgins began also to kiss Hermas, to lead him around the tower and play with him. Hermas, like a young man, began to play with them. Some of the virgins formed a chorus, others danced and others sang. Keeping silent, Hermas walked with them around the tower and was merry with them. When it grew late, Hermas wished to enter into the house but the virgins did not allow him and detained him. So, Hermas remained with them during the night and slept beside the tower. The virgins spread their linen tunics on the ground and made Hermas lie down in the midst of them. The virgins did nothing but pray and Hermas prayed with them ceaselessly, not less than the virgins did. The virgins rejoiced due to his prayer. Hermas remained with the

virgins until the next day, at the second hour. Then, the Shepherd returned and said to the virgins: "Did you offer him any insult?" The virgins answered: "Ask him." Hermas said to the Shepherd: "Sir, I was delighted that I remained with them." He said: "On what? Did you sup?" Hermas replied: "I supped on the words of the Lord the whole night." He asked: "Did they receive you well?" Hermas answered: "Yes, sir." He said: "Now, what do you wish to hear first?" Hermas said: "I wish to hear in the order in which you showed me from the beginning. I beg you, sir, that as I shall ask you, so also you will give me the explanation." He replied: "As you wish, so also I will explain to you and will conceal nothing at all from you."

Chapter 12

Hermas said: "Sir, first of all, explain me what is the meaning of the rock and of the gate?" He answered: "This rock and this gate are the Son of God." Hermas asked: "How, sir? The rock is old and the gate is new." He said: "Listen and understand, O ignorant man. The Son of God is older than all His creatures, so He was a fellow - councillor with the Father in His work of creation and for this reason he is old." Hermas said: "And why is the gate new, sir?" He answered: "The gate is new because He became in the last days of the dispensation; for this reason, the gate was made new, so that they who are to be saved by it might enter into the kingdom of God. You saw that those stones which are in the gate were used for the building of the tower and those which did not come, were again thrown back to their own place?" Hermas answered: "I saw, sir." He continued: "In like manner, no one shall enter into the Kingdom of God unless he receives His holy care. For if desire to enter into a city and that city is surrounded by a wall and has only one gate, can you enter into that city save through the gate which it has?" Hermas replied: "How can it be otherwise, sir?" He continued: "Then, if you cannot enter into the city except through its gate, in like manner, a man cannot enter into the Kingdom of God otherwise than by the name of His beloved Son. You saw the multitude who were building the tower?" Hermas answered: "I saw them, sir." He continued: "Those are all glorious angels and by them, accordingly, the Lord is surrounded. The gate is the Son of God and is the unique entrance to the Lord. Then, in no other way should any one enter in to Him, except through His Son. You saw the six men and the tall, glorious man in the midst of them, who walked round the tower and rejected the stones from the building?" Hermas answered: "I saw him, sir." He said: "The glorious man is the Son of God and those six glorious angels are those who support Him on the right hand and on the left hand. None of these glorious angels will enter in unto God apart from Him. Whosoever does not receive His name, shall not enter into the Kingdom of God."

Chapter 13

Hermas asked: "What means the tower?" He replied: "This tower is the Church." Hermas asked: "And who are these virgins?" He replied: "These virgins are the holy spirits and men cannot otherwise be found in the Kingdom of God unless these have put their clothing upon them; if you receive the name only and do not receive from them the clothing, they are of no advantage to you, for these

virgins are the powers of the Son of God. If you bear His name but do not possess His powers, it will be in vain that you bear His name. The stones which you saw rejected bore His name but did not put on the clothing of the virgins." Hermas asked: "Of what nature is their clothing, sir?" He said: "Their very names are their clothing. Everyone who bears the name of the Son of God ought to bear also the names of these, for the Son Himself bears the names also of these. As many stones as you saw come into the building of the tower through the hands of these virgins have been clothed with their strength. For this reason, you see that the tower became of one stone with the rock. Those who have believed on the Lord through His Son and are clothed with these spirits, shall become one spirit, one body and the colour of their garments shall be one. The dwelling of such as bear the names of the virgins is in the tower." Hermas asked: "On what account were rejected those stones, for they passed through the gate and were placed by the hands of the virgins in the building of the tower?" He replied: "Since you take interest in everything and examine minutely, hear about the stones that were rejected. All these received the name of God and also the strength of these virgins. Thus, these spirits were made strong and wrought righteousness. However, after a certain time, they were persuaded by the women you saw, clothed in black, having their shoulders exposed, their hair dishevelled and apparently beautiful. Having seen these women, they desired to own them and clothed themselves with their strength and put off the strength of the virgins, who were accordingly rejected from the house of God and given over to these women. Those who were not deceived by the beauty of these women, remained in the house of God. You have the explanation for those who were rejected."

Chapter 14

Hermas said: "What if these men, being such as they are, repent and put away their desires for these women, return again to the virgins, walk in their strength and in their works? They shall not enter into the house of God?" The Shepherd said: "They shall enter if they put away the works of these women, put on again the strength of the virgins and walk in their works. On this account, there was a cessation in the building so that if they repent, they may depart into the building of the tower. If they do not repent, others will replace them and they will be cast out in the end. I gave all things thanks to the Lord because He had pity on all who call upon His name. The Lord sent the angel of repentance to us, who sinned against Him and renewed our spirit. When we were already destroyed and had no hope of life, He restored us to the newness of life." Hermas continued: "Now, sir, show me why the tower was not built upon the ground but upon the rock and upon the gate." He said: "Are you still without sense and understanding?" Hermas answered: "Sir, I must ask of all things because I am entirely unable to understand them, for all of these are things great, glorious and difficult to understand for the human being." He said: "Listen: the name of the Son of God is great, cannot be contained and supports the whole world. Thus, if the whole creation is supported by the Son of God, what do you think of those who are called by Him and bear the name of the Son of God and walk in His commandments? Do you see what kind of persons He supports? Those who bear His name with their whole heart.

Accordingly, He Himself became a foundation to them and supports them with joy, because they are not ashamed to bear His name."

Chapter 15

Hermas said: "Explain to me, sir, the names of those virgins and of those women who were clothes in black raiment." He said: "Hear the names of the stronger virgins who stood at the corners. The first is Faith, the second is Continence, the third is Power, the fourth is Patience. The others standing in the midst of these have thew following names: Simplicity, Innocence, Purity, Cheerfulness, Truth, Understanding, Harmony, Love. He who bears these names and that of the Son of God will be able to enter into the Kingdom of God. Hear also the names of the women who had the black garments; these four are stronger than the rest. The first is Unbelief, the second is Incontinence, the third is Disobedience, the fourth is Deceit. Their followers are called: Sorrow, Wickedness, Wantonness, Anger, Falsehood, Folly, Backbiting, Hatred. The servant of God who bears these names shall see, indeed, the Kingdom of God but shall not enter into it." Hermas said: "What are the stones which were taken out of the pit and fitted into the building?" He answered: "The first, the ten that were placed as a foundation are the first generation of righteous men; the twenty - five are the second generation of righteous men; the thirty - five are the prophets of God and His ministers; the forty are the apostles and teachers of the preaching of the Son of God." Hermas asked: "Sir, why then did the virgins carry these stones also through the gate and give them for the building of the tower?" He answered: "Because these were the first who bore these spirits and they never departed from each other, neither the spirits from men nor the men from the spirits, but the spirits remained with them until their falling asleep. Unless they had these spirits with them, they would not have been of use for the building of this tower."

Chapter 16

Hermas said: "Explain to me a little further, sir!" He asked: "What is it that you desire?" Hermas said: "Sir, why these stones ascend out of the pit and are applied to the building of the tower, after having borne these spirits?" He answered: "They were obliged to ascend through water so that they might be made alive for, unless they laid aside the mortality of their life, they could not enter in another way into the Kingdom of God. Before a man bears the name of the Son of God, he is dead but when he receives the seal, he lays aside his deadness and obtains life. The seal is the water: they descend into the water dead and they arise alive. Accordingly, the seal was preached to them and they used it so that might enter into the Kingdom of God." Hermas asked: "Sir, why did the forty stone also ascend with them out of the pit, having already received the seal?" He said: "Because these apostles and teachers who preached the name of the Son of God, after falling asleep in the power and faith of the Son of God, preached it not only to those who were asleep, but they also gave them the seal of preaching. Accordingly, they descend with them into the water and ascended again. Those who descended alive, rose up alive again; those who had previously fallen asleep, descended dead but rose up alive again. By these, they were quickened and made to know the name of the Son of God. For this reason, they also ascended with them and were fitted along with them into the building of the tower; they were untouched by the chisel

and were built in along with them. They slept in righteousness and in great purity but they had not this seal. Accordingly, you have the explanation of these also."

Chapter 17

Hermas replied: "I understand, sir. Now explain me, sir, for what reason the mountains have various forms?" He said: "Listen, these mountains are the twelve tribes which inhabit the whole world. Accordingly, the Son of God was preached unto them by the apostles." Hermas said: "But why, sir, are the mountains of various kinds, having different forms? Explain that to me, sir." He answered: "Listen, these twelve tribes that inhabit the whole world are twelve nations; they vary in prudence and understanding. As numerous as are the varieties of the mountains which you saw, so numerous are the diversities of mind and understanding among the nations. I will explain to you the actions of each one." Hermas said: "Sir, first explain why, when the mountains are so diverse, when placed in the buildings, their stones become one colour, shinning like those that had ascended out of the pit." He said: "Because all the nations that dwell under heaven were called by hearing and believing upon the name of the Son of God. Therefore, having received the seal, they had one understanding and one mind. Their faith became one, their love became one and with the name they bore also the spirits of the virgins. On this account, the building of the tower became of one colour, bright as the sun. After they had entered into the same place and became one body, certain of these defiled themselves and were expelled from the race of the righteous and became again what they were before or rather worse.

Chapter 18

Hermas asked: "Sir, how did they become worse, after having known God?" He answered: "He that does not know God and practices evil, receives a certain chastisement for his wickedness but he that has known God ought not any longer to do evil, but to do good. Accordingly, if he did evil when he had to do good, does he not appear to do greater evil than he who does not know God? For this reason, those who have not known God and do evil are condemned to death but those who have known God and have seen His mighty works and still continue in evil, shall be chastised doubly and shall die forever. Therefore, the Church of God will be purified in this way. As, the stones rejected from the tower, delivered to the evil spirits and cast out thence, so they shall be cast out and there shall be one body of the purified, as the tower also became of one stone after its purification. In like manner it will be with the Church of God, after it has been purified and has rejected the wicked, the hypocrites, the blasphemers, the waverers and those who commit wickedness of different kinds. After these have been cast away, the Church of God shall be one body, of one mind, of one understanding, of one faith, of one love. Then the Son of God will be exceedingly glad and shall rejoice over them because He has received this people pure." Hermas said: "Sir, all these things are great and glorious. Sir, explain to me the power and actions of each one of the mountains, that every soul, trusting in the Lord and hearing it, may glorify His great, marvellous and glorious name."

Chapter 19

The Shepherd said: "Hear the diversity of the mountains and of the twelve nations. The first mountain was black and the believers from there were the following: apostates and blasphemes against the Lord and betrayers of the servants of God. For these, repentance is not open but death lies before them. On this account, they are also black for their race is a lawless one. The second mountain was bare and the believers from it are the following: hypocrites and teachers of wickedness. Accordingly, they are like the former, not having any fruits of righteousness. As their mountain was destitute of fruit, so also such men have a name indeed but are empty of faith and there is no fruit of truth in them. If they repent quickly, they indeed have repentance in their power. If they are slow in doing so, they shall die along with the former." Hermas asked: "Sir, why these have repentance but the former do not?" He said: "On this account, these have repentance because they did not blaspheme their Lord and did not become betrayers of the servants of God. They became hypocritical on account of their desire of possessions and each one taught according to the desires of human sinners. But they will suffer a certain punishment and repentance is before them, because they are not blasphemers or traitors."

Chapter 20

"The third mountain had thorns and thistles. The believers from the third mountain are the following: some are rich and others immersed in much business. The thistles are the rich and the thorns are those immersed in much business. Those entangles in many kinds of businesses do not cleave to the servants of God but wander away, being chocked by the business transaction. The rich cleave difficulty to the servants of God, fearing that these may ask something from them. Accordingly, such persons have difficulty in entering into the Kingdom of God. Repentance is open to all these so that what they did not do in former times they may accomplish in these days and do some good. They shall live unto God. If they abide in their deeds, they shall be delivered to those women, who will put them to death."

Chapter 21

"The fourth mountain has much grass; the upper parts of the plants and the parts near the roots are withered and some are scorched by the sun. The believers from the fourth mountain were the following: the doubtful and those who have the Lord upon their lips but have Him not in their heart. On this account, their foundations are withered and have no strength. Only their words live while their works are dead. Such persons are neither alive nor dead. Therefore, they resemble the waverers for wavering are neither withered nor green, being neither living nor dead. As their blades were withered on seeing the sun, so also the wavering, on account of their fear, worship idols and are ashamed of the name of their Lord, when they hear of affliction. Such are neither alive nor dead. They may yet live, if they quickly repent; if they do not repent, they are already delivered to the women, who take away their lives."

Chapter 22

"The fifth mountain had green grass and was rugged. Those who believed from the fifth mountain are the following: believers but slow to learn, obstinate, pleasing themselves, wishing to know everything and knowing nothing at all. On account of this obstinacy of theirs, understanding departed from them and foolish senselessness penetrated them. They praise themselves as having wisdom and desiring to become teachers, although destitute of sense. Therefore, on account of this loftiness of mind, many became vain, exalting themselves for self - will and empty. Confidence is a great demon. Accordingly, many of them were rejected but some repented, believed and subjected themselves to those who had understanding, knowing their own foolishness. Repentance is open for the rest of this class because they were not wicked but rather foolish and without understanding. Therefore, if these repent, they will live unto God but if they do not repent, they shall have their dwelling with the women who wrought wickedness among them."

Chapter 23

"The sixth mountain ha large and clefts and decayed grass in the clefts. The believers from the sixth mountain were the following: those who occupy the small clefts are those who bring charges against one another and, due to their slanders, they have decayed in the faith. However, many of them have repented and the rest will also repent when they hear my commandments for their slanders are small and they will quickly repent. Those who occupy the large clefts are persistent in their slanders and vindictive in their anger against each other. Therefore, these were thrown away from the tower and rejected from having a part in its building. Accordingly, such persons shall have difficulty in living. If our God and Lord, who rules over all things and has power over all His creation does not remember evil against those who confess their sins but is merciful, does man, who is corruptible and full of sins, remember evil against a fellow - man, as he were able to destroy or to save him? I, the angel of repentance, say to you: "As many of you as are of this way of thinking, lay it aside, repent and the Lord will heal your former sins, if you purify yourselves from this demon but if not, you will be delivered over to him for death.""

Chapter 24

"On the seventh mountain the grass was green and flourishing; the whole mountain was fertile. Every kind of cattle and the fowls of heaven were feeding on the grass of this mountain, which became more abundant. The believers from the seventh mountain were always simple, harmless and blessed, bringing no charges one against the other but always rejoicing greatly because of the servants of God, being clothed with the holy spirit of these virgins, always having pity on every man, giving aid from their own labour to everyman, without reproach or hesitation. Therefore, seeing their simplicity and their whole meekness, the Lord multiplied them amid the labour of their hands and gave them grace in all their actions. I, the angel of repentance, say to you who are such: "Continue to be such as these and your seed will never be blotted out for the Lord has made trial of you, inscribed

you in the number of us and the whole of your seed will dwell with the Son of God, for you have received His Spirit.""

Chapter 25

"On the eighth mountain were many fountains and all the creatures of God drank from them The believers from the eighth mountain were the apostles, the teachers who preached to the whole world and who taught solemnly and purely the word of the Lord. They absolutely did not fall into evil desires but always walked in righteousness and truth, according to the Holy Spirit which they had received. Therefore, such persons shall enter in with the angels."

Chapter 26

The ninth mountain was deserted. It contained creeping objects and wild beasts which destroy human beings. The believers from the ninth mountain were those who had stains and servants, who discharged badly their duty, who plundered widows and orphans of their livelihood and gained for themselves possessions from the ministry which they have received. Therefore, if they remain under the dominion of the same desire, they are dead and there is no hope of life for them. If they repent and finish their ministry in a holy manner, they shall be able to live. Those who were covered with scabs are those who have denied their Lord and have not returned to Him again. By becoming withered and desert - like, not cleaving to the servants of God but living in solitude, they destroy their own souls. When it is left within an enclosure and neglected, the vine is destroyed by the weeds which make it desolate and, in time, it grows wild and useless for its master. Similar to this are such men who have contracted savage habits, gave up themselves and became useless to their Lord. These humans are capable of repentance, unless it is found that they denied it from their heart. I do not know if someone who denied repentance from his heart may live. I say this not for the present days, so that any one who has denied the Lord may obtain repentance. It is impossible that the denier of the Lord in the present should obtain repentance. It seems possible that repentance can be obtained for those who denied Him long ago. Therefore, if any one intends to repent, he should do so quickly, before the tower is completed. If he does not repent, he will be utterly destroyed the women. The chipped stones are deceitful and the slanderers. The wild beasts of the ninth mountain are the same. As wild beasts destroy and kill a man by their poison, so also the words of such men destroy and ruin a human Accordingly, these are mutilated in their faith, on account of the deeds which they have done in themselves. Yet, some repented and were saved. The others, who are of such character, can be saved if they repent. If they do not repent, they will perish with those women whose strength they have assumed."

Chapter 27

The tenth mountain, some trees overshadowed certain sheep. The believers of the tenth mountain were the following: bishops dedicated to hospitality, who always gladly received in their houses the servants of God, without dissimulation. By their service, the bishops never failed to protect the widows and those who were in want; they always maintained a holy conversation. Accordingly, all these

shall be protected for ever by the Lord. They who do these things are honourable before God and their place is already with the angels, if they remain to the end serving God."

Chapter 28

"On the eleventh mountain were trees full of fruits, adorned with various kinds of fruits. The believers of the eleventh mountain were those who suffered cheerfully with their whole heart for the name of the Son of God and laid down their lives." Hermas asked: "Why then, sir, do all these trees bear fruit and some of them are fairer that the others?" He said: "Listen, all who once suffered for the name of the Lord are honourable before God and their sins were remitted because they suffered for the name of the Son of God. Their fruits are of various kinds due to the following reason: all who were brought before the authorities and were examined and did not deny but suffered cheerfully are held in greater honour with God and their fruit is superior. The fruit of all who were cowards, doubtful and who reasoned in their heart whether they should deny or confess and yet suffered is less because this suggestion came in their hearts. The suggestion that the servant should deny his Lord is evil. Therefore, those who are planning such things should take care lest that suggestion remains in their hearts and you perish unto God. Those who suffer for His name ought to glorify God, because He deemed you worthy to bear His name, that all your sins might be healed. Therefore, if any of you suffer on account of God, deem yourselves happy and think that you have done a great thing. The Lord bestows upon your life and you do not understand because your sins were heavy. If you had not suffered for the name of the Lord, you would have to God on account of your sins. I say these things to you who are hesitating about denying or confessing: acknowledge that you have the Lord lest, by denying Him, you will be delivered up in prison. When heathen castigate their slaves, if one of them denies his master, what do you think will do the Lord, who has authority over all men? Put away these counsels out of your hearts, so that you may live continually unto God."

Chapter 29

"The twelfth mountain was white. The believers from the twelfth mountain were the following: infant children, in whose hearts no evil originates and who do not know what is wickedness. Consequently, they always remain children. Undoubtedly, such spirits dwell in the Kingdom of God because they defiled in nothing the commandments of God. They remained in the same state of mind during all their life. All of you, who shall remain steadfast and be as children, without doing evil, will be more honoured than all who have been previously mentioned for all infants are honourable before God and are the first persons with Him. Blessed are you who put away wickedness from yourselves and put on innocence. You will live unto God as the first of all."

After the Shepherd finished the similitudes of the mountains, Hermas told him: "Sir, explain me now about the stones that were taken out of the plain and put into the building instead of the stones that were taken out of the tower and about the round stones that were put into the building and those that still remain round."

Chapter 30

He answered: "Hear about all these also. The stones taken out of the plain and put into the building of those rejected are the roots of this white mountain. When all the believers from the white mountain were found guileless, the Lord of the tower commanded those from the roots of the mountain to be cast into the building of the tower. The Lord of the tower knew that if these stones were to go to the building of the tower, they would remain bright and none of them would become black. If he had resolved in this manner concerning the other mountains, he would have had to visit that tower again and cleanse it. All the persons who believed and still believe were found to be white, for they are of the same race. This is a happy race because it is innocent. Hear more about the round and shinning stones, which are also from the white mountain. These stones were found round because their riches had obscured and darkened them a little from the truth, although they have never departed from God; nor did any evil word proceed out of their mouth but all justice, virtue and truth. Therefore, when the Lord saw the mind of these persons, that they were born good and could be good, He ordered their riches to be cut down, not to be taken away for ever, that they might be able to do some good with what was left them. They will live unto God because they are of a good race. Therefore, they were rounded a little by the chisel and put in the building of the tower."

Chapter 31

"The other round stones, which were not yet adapted to the building of the tower and have not received yet the seal, were put back into their place because they are exceedingly round. This age must be cut down in these things and in the vanities of their riches and then they will meet in the Kingdom of God, because the Lord has blessed this innocent race. Therefore, no one of this race will perish for, although any of them may be tempted by the most wicked devil and commit sin, he will quickly return to his Lord. I am the messenger of repentance and I deem you happy, whoever you are, innocent as children, because your part is good and honourable before God. Moreover, I say to you all, who have received the seal of the Son of God, to be clothed with simplicity, be not mindful of the offences and do not remain in wickedness. Therefore, lay aside the recollection of your offences and bitterness and you will be formed in one spirit. Heal and take away from you those wicked schisms so that the Lord of the flocks comes and rejoice concerning you. He will rejoice if He will find all things sound and none of you shall perish. But if He finds one of these sheep strayed, woe to the shepherds. If the shepherds themselves have strayed, what answer will they give Him for their flocks? Will they, perchance, say that they were harassed by their flocks? They will not be believed for it is incredible that a shepherd could suffer from this flock. He will rather be punished on account of his falsehood. I am myself a shepherd and I am under a most stringent necessity of rendering an account of you."

Chapter 32

"Therefore, heal yourselves, while the tower is still building. The Lord dwells in men that love peace because He loved peace but the Lord is far distant from the contentions and the utterly wicked. Therefore, restore to Him a sound spirit, as you received it. When you have given a new garment to a fuller, desiring that he

will return it to you entire as in the beginning, but the fuller returns you a torn garment, will you take it from him? Will you not be angry and abuse him saying: "I gave you a garment that was entire. Why have you sent it and made it useless so that it can be of no use on account of the rent which you have made in it?" Would you not say all this to the fuller about the rent which you found in your garment? Therefore, if you grieve about your garment and complain because you have not received it entire, what do you think the Lord will do to you, who gave you a sound spirit, which you have rendered altogether useless, so that it can be useless for its owner? Its use began to be unprofitable, seeing that it was corrupted by you. Therefore, will not the Lord act similarly due to this conduct of yours concerning His Spirit and deliver you over to death? Assuredly, I say, He will do the same to all those whom He will find that they retain a recollection of offences. He says that you should not trample His mercy under foot but rather honour Him because He is so patient with your sins and He is not as you are. Repent, for it is useful to you."

Chapter 33

"I, the Shepherd, the messenger of repentance, have shown and spoken to the servants of God all the things which are written above. Therefore, if you believe and listen to my words, walk in them and amend your ways, you shall have it in your power to live. But if you remain in wickedness and in the recollection of offences, no sinner of this class will live unto God. All these words which I had to say have been spoken unto you."

The Shepherd said to Hermas: "Have you asked me everything?" Hermas replied: "Yes, sir." He asked: "Why did you not ask me about the shape of stones that were put in the building, that I might explain to you why we filled up the shapes?" Hermas said: "I forgot, sir." He said: "Hear then now about this also. These are they who have now heard my commandments and repented with their whole hearts. When the Lord saw that their repentance was good and pure and that they were able to remain in it, He ordered their former sins to be blotted out, for these shapes were their sins and they were levelled down so that they might not be appear."

Similitude tenth

Concerning Repentance and Alms - giving

Chapter 1

After Hermas had written down this book, the messenger who delivered him to the Shepherd came into the house in which Hermas was found and sat upon a coach the Shepherd sat on his right hand. Then he called Hermas and spoke to him: "I have delivered you and your house to the Shepherd, that you may be protected by him." Hermas said: "Yes, sir." He said: "If you wish therefore to be protected from all annoyance, from all harsh treatment and to have success in every good work and word and to possess all the virtues of righteousness, walk in these commandments which he has given you and you will be able to subdue all wickedness. If you keep those commandments, every desire and pleasure of the world will be subject to you and success will attend you in every good work. Take

unto yourself into yourself his experience and moderation and say to all that he is great honour and dignity with God and that he is a president with great power and mighty in his space. He is unique throughout the world to whom is assigned the power of repentance. Does he seem to you to be powerful? You despise his experience and the moderation which he exercises towards you."

Chapter 2

Hermas said to the Shepherd: "Ask himself, sir, whether for the time he has entered in any house, I have done anything improper or have offended him in any respect." He answered: "I also know that you neither have done anything improper and, therefore, I speak these words to you, that you may persevere. For he had a good report of you to me and will say these words to others so that also those who have been repented or still may repent may entertain the same feelings with you and he may report well of these to me and I may to the Lord." Hermas said: "Sir, I make known to every man the great works of God. I hope that all those who love the works of God and have sinned before hearing these words may repent and receive life again." He said: "Continue, therefore in this ministry and finish it. All who follow out his commands shall have life and great honour with the Lord but those who do not keep his commandments, flee from his life and despise him. But he has his own honour with the Lord. Therefore, all who shall despise him and do not follow His commands, deliver themselves to death and everyone of them will be guilty of his own blood. Bu t I enjoy you that you obey His commands and you will have a cure for your former sins."

Chapter 3

"Moreover, I send you these virgins that they will dwell with you, for I saw that they were courteous to you. Therefore, you will have them as assistants that you may be more able to keep his commands for it is impossible that these commands should be observed without the virgins. Moreover, I see that they abide with you willingly but I will also instruct them not to depart at all from your house. You should only keep your house pure as they will delight to dwell in a pure abode, for they are pure, chaste and industrious and have all influence with the Lord. Therefore, if they find your house to be pure, they will remain with you but if any defilement, even a small one, befall it, they will immediately withdraw from your house for these virgins do not like at all anu defilement." Hermas said: "I hope, sir, that I will please them so that they may always be willing to inhabit my house. As he, to whom you entrusted me, has no complaint against me, so neither they will have." Hermas said to the Shepherd: "I see that the servant of God wishes to live and to keep these commandments and will place these virgins in a pure habitation." When he had spoken these words, he again delivered Hermas to the Shepherd, called the virgins and told them: "Since I see that you are willing to dwell in his house, I commend him and his house to you, asking that you withdraw not at all from it." The virgins heard these words with pleasure.

Chapter 4

Then, the angel told to Hermas: "Conduct yourself manfully in this service and make known to every one the great things of God and you have favour in this

ministry. Therefore, whoever shall walk in these commandments, shall have life and will be happy in his life but whosoever shall neglect these commandments, shall not have life and will be unhappy in this life. Enjoin all who are able to act rightly, not to cease well - doing. The practice of food works is useful who are able to act rightly. I say that every man ought to be saved from inconveniences. The one who is in want and the one who suffers inconveniences are in great torture and necessity. Therefore, whoever rescues a soul of this kind from necessity will gain for himself great joy. He who harassed by this kind of inconvenience, suffers equal torture with him who is in chains. Due to unendurable calamities of this kind, many hasten to their own death. Therefore, whoever knows that a calamity of this kind afflicts a human being and does not save him, commits a great sin and becomes guilty of his blood. Therefore, you who received good from the Lord, do good works. If you delay to do good works, you will be rejected from the building of the tower to be finished. Now, there is no other tower in the building. The work of building the tower was suspended on your account. Therefore, unless you make haste to do rightly, the tower will be completed and you will be excluded."

After he had spoken to Hermas, the angel rose up from the couch and departed taking the Shepherd and the virgins. However, the angel said to Hermas that he would send back the Shepherd and the virgins to the dwelling of Hermas. Amen.

Notes

1. *The Pastor of Hermas* in A. Roberts & J. Donaldson (eds.), *Ante-Nicene Christian Library: Translations of the Writings of the Fathers of the Church down to 325 AD*, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1867) v. 1, p. 317 ff.
2. "The Son of Man will go just as it is written about him. But woe to that man who betrays the Son of Man! It would be better for him if he had not been born." Matthew 26:24 [AT]
3. Vatican version: "That you may live to God and they who keep these commandments will live to God."
4. See Ecclesiastes 12:13: "Fear God and keep His commandments for this is the whole duty of man."

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Abel, the first son of Adam and Eve
Abiram, Biblical character
Abraham, founding father of Judaism, Biblical character
Adam, the first human created by God
Agathopus, companion of Ignatius of Antioch
Anacletus d. cca. 92 AD, bishop of Rome c. 79 AD - 92 AD
Anna the Prophetess, mentioned in Luke 2:36 - 38
Antiochia, Hellenistic city
Apollos, Jewish - Christian from Alexandria
Arcadia, region in central Peloponnese, Greece

Basilides, gnostic teacher in Alexandria between 117 AD - 138 AD
Belial, biblical term for the personification as devil, wickedness and evil
Cain, son of Adam and Eve in the Bible
Campania, region in south - western Italy
Cassian (John the Ascetic) (c. 360 - c. 435), Christian monk and theologian, successor of Pope Linus
Castabala (Hierapolis), city in Cilicia, Turkey
Cilicia, region in south eastern Turkey
Clemens from Alexandria (c. 150 AD - c. 215 AD), Christian theologian and philosopher
Clement of Rome (c. 35 AD - c. 99 AD), first Apostolic Father, bishop of Rome
Cleobulus Tiberius Claudius (c. 165 AD - c. 213 AD), Roman senator
Daniel, noble Jew exiled in Babylon, main character of the Book of Daniel in the Old Testament
Damas, bishop of Magnesia in the second century AD
David, Jewish king in the 11th century BC
Domitian (51 AD - 96 AD), Roman emperor (81 AD - 96 AD)
Elad, mentioned in Numbers 11:26 - 27
Elijah, prophet and miracle worker (9th century BC)
Elisha, prophet and miracle worker (9th century BC)
Ephesus, ancient city in the central Aegean region in Turkey
Ephraim, the second son of Joseph
Essau, son of Isaac, Biblical character
Eucharist, (*The Holy Communion*, *The Blessed Sacrament*, *Lord's Supper*), Christian rite
Euodia, Christian female mentioned in Philippians 4: 2 - 3
Evaristus, bishop of Rome (c. 99 AD - c. 107 AD), venerated saint in the Eastern Orthodox Church, the Catholic Church and the Oriental Orthodoxy
Eve, the first female human created by God
Evodius (d. c. 69 AD), Christian bishop of Antioch
Ezekiel, Hebrew prophet (d. around 570 BC), author of the *Book of Ezekiel* from the Old Testament
Fronto (Marius Cornelius Fronto) (c. 100 AD - c. 160 AD), Roman grammarian, rhetorician, advocate
Germanicus of Smyrna (d. 155 AD), Christian martyr
Hades, underworld and king of the underworld in Greek religion and mythology
Herod Agrippa (Marcus Julius Agrippa) (c. 11 BC - c. 44 AD), last Jewish king of Judaea
Herod Antipas (c. 20 BC - c. 39 AD), (Herod the Tetrarch), ruler of the areas of Galilee and Perea
Ignatius of Antioch (d. c. 108/140 AD), early Christian writer, patriarch of Antioch
Isaac, son of Abraham (Genesis), Biblical character
Isaiah, Israelite prophet from the 8th century BC
Jacob, the son of Isaac and Sarah
James the Just, (1st century AD), martyred in 62 AD or 69 AD, brother of the Lord (Mark 6:3; Matthew 13:55)
Jeremiah (c. 650 BC - c. 570 BC), major prophet of the Old Testament
Jericho, ancient settlement in the Jordan valley
Job, central figure of the *Book of Job*
John the Apostle (c. 6 AD - c. 100 AD), one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus

John the Baptist (d. c. 30 AD), Christian saint, preacher in the area of the Jordan river
Jonah, prophet of the Bible (c. 8th century)
Joseph, son of Jacob and Rachel, Biblical character
Joseph of Arimathea, disciple of Jesus, assumed the responsibility for the burial of Jesus
Joshua (Yehoshua), leader of the Israelite tribes after Moses
Josiah (cca. 639 BC - 609 BC), king of Judah
Judah, son of Jacob, Biblical character
Judas Iscariot (d. c. 30 AD), disciple of Christ, known for his betrayal
Judith, widow, deuterocanonical book
Laban, Biblical character
Linus, d. cca. 97 AD, bishop of Rome from 67 AD, canonized
Lot, nephew of Abraham, Biblical character
Magnesia, eastern region in ancient Greece
Manasseh, first son of Joseph
Maris, bishop od Neapolis in the 4th century
Medad, mentioned in Numbers 11:26 - 27
Menander Samaritan, Gnostic and magician from the first century AD
Melchizedek, king of Salem (Genesis 14:18 - 20)
Moses, Hebrew teacher and leader
Nicolaitanes, early Christian sect, considered heretical in the early Christian Church
Noah, Biblical character previous to the deluge
Onesimus (*Onesimus of Byzantium*, *The Holy Apostle Onesimus of the Eastern Orthodox Church*), converted Christian from the 1st century
Paraclete (John 14:16), counsellor, advocate
Paul the Apostle (Saul of Tarsus) (c. 5 AD. - c. 64 AD), early Christian apostle
Peter (d. c. 64 AD), Christian apostle (Cephas)
Pharisees, members of a Jewish school of thought in the period of the Second Temple (c. 167 BC -
c. 73 AD)
Philadelphia, a town of ancient Cilicia in south east Turkey, which in time became an episcopal see
Philo, deacon of Cilicia, 2nd second century AD
Polybius, bishop of Tralles in the 2nd century AD
Polycarp (flourished in the 2nd century AD), Greek Bishop of Smyrna and Apostolic Father
Pontius Pilate, governor of the Roman province of Judaea during the period 27 AD - 37 AD; presided the trial of Jesus Christ and ordered the crucifixion
Portus, artificial harbour of ancient Rome in the northern part of the Tiber
Puteoli (Italian: Pozzuoli), commune and city near Naples, Italy
Quintus, apostate from Phrygia, mid. 2nd century AD
Rachel, one of the wives of Jacob, mother of Joseph
Rebecca, wife of Isaac
Rahab, gentile woman from Jericho
Rufus, bishop of Thebes, 1st century AD
Salome (Salome III), Jewish princess, daughter of Herod II (c. 27 BC - c. 33 - 34 AD)
Samuel, (c. 1070 BC - c. 1012 BC), venerated prophet in the Bible

Sanhedrin, legislative and judicial assembly in the ancient land of Israel
Sarah, wife of Abraham, mother of Isaac
Saul, king of Israel (11th century BC)
Scribes, Jewish recordkeepers
Senecio (Quintus Sosius Senecio), consul favoured by the emperors Domitian and Trajan
Sheba, ancient kingdom in the area of South Arabia and Eastern Africa
Simon Magus, Samaritan convert to Christianity from the first century AD
Smyrna, Greek city on the Aegean coast of Anatolia, Turkey
Sodom, city destroyed by God for its wickedness
Solomon (Jedidiah), son and successor of King David, monarch of Israel in the period 970 BC - 931 BC
Statius Quadratus (fl. mid. 2nd century AD), senator of the Roman Empire, presided the trial of Polycarp
Stephen (c. 5 AD - c. 34 AD), Christian martyr
Sura (Lucius Licinius Sura), consul and friend of emperor Trajan
Tarsus, ancient city in south - east Turkey
Theodotus (fl. 2nd century AD), theologian condemned as heretic in the Early Church
Timothy (Timothy of Ephesus) d. c. 97 AD) saint, early Christian evangelist
Titus (d. 107 AD), saint, early Christian missionary, bishop
Titus Caesar Vespasianus (39 AD - 81 AD), Roman Emperor (79 AD - 81 AD)
Tobit, deuterocanonical Jewish book of the 2nd - 3rd century BC
Trajan (Traianus) (53 AD - c. 117 AD), Roman emperor (98 AD - 117 AD)
Tralles (diocese), a town and diocese of the Hellenic, Roman and Byzantine empires in the south - west of modern Turkey.
Troas, (Alexandria Troas), ancient Greek city near the Aegean Sea on the western side of the Turkish peninsula in northwestern Anatolia, Turkey
Vitalis of Milan, early Christian martyr and saint from the 1st century AD
Xanthicus, the sixth month of the Macedonian calendar of the Seleucid Syrians. It corresponds with the month of April in the Gregorian calendar
Zechariah, author of the *Book of Zechariah*, the eleventh of the Twelve Minor Prophets
Zacharias, priest in the time of Herod, King of Judaea (Luke 1: 5 - 6)
Zosimus, Christian martyr executed during the reign of emperor Trajan

Appendix

The Spurious Epistles of Ignatius

The Epistle of Maria the Proselyte to Ignatius

Maria, a proselyte of Jesus Christ to Ignatius Theophorus, most blessed bishop of the apostolic church which is in Antioch, beloved in God the Father and Jesus: Happiness and safety. We all beg for thee joy and health in Him.

Chapter 1: Occasion of the epistle

Since Christ, to our wonder, has been made known among us to be the Son of the living God and became man in these last times by means of Virgin Mary, of the seed of David and Abraham, according to the announcements previously made regarding Him and through Him by the prophets, we therefore beseech and entreat that, by our wisdom, Maris our friend, bishop of our native Neapolis, which is near Zarbus and Eulogius and Sobelus, the presbyter to be sent to us , so that we may not destitute of duch as predide over the divine world. As Moses also says: "16. Let the LORD, the God of the spirits of all flesh, set a man over the congregation 17. Which may go out before them, and which may go in before them, and which may lead them out, and which may bring them in; that the congregation of the LORD be not as sheep which have no shepherd." (1)

Chapter 2: Youth may be allied with piety and discretion

Those whom we have named young men do not have any apprehension and are insensible to the passions of the flesh. They are glowing with all the glory of a hoary head through their own intrinsic merits. They were called to priesthood as young men only recently. Now, you call up into exercise your thoughts through the Spirit that God ha given to you by Christ: you will never remember that Samuel, while he was still a young child, was called a seer and was reckoned in the way of prophets, reproved the aged Eli for transgressions, since he had honoured his infatuated sons above God, the author of all things and has allowed them to go unpunished when they turned the office of the priesthood into ridicule and acted violently towards the people.

Chapter 3: Examples of youthful devotedness

The wise Daniel, while he was young, passed judgement on certain vigorous old men, showing them that they were abandoned wretches, unworthy to be reckoned elders, although they were Jews by extraction and Canaanites by practice. When Jeremiah, on account of his youth, declined the office of prophet entrusted to him by God, he was told by God: "But the LORD said unto me, Say not, I *am* a child: for thou shalt go to all that I shall send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." (2) The wise Solomon, when he was only twelve years old, understood the great question of the ignorance of women respecting their children, when it was not known to whom these respectively belonged. The whole people were all astonished at such wisdom in a child and venerated him as being not a mere youth but a fully grown man. He solved the difficult questions of the queen of Ethiopians which profited of them as the streams of the Nile have fertility in such a manner that this woman, though herself so wise, was very astonished.

Chapter 4: The same subject continued

Josiah, also beloved of God, when he could scarcely speak articulately, convicts those who were possessed of a wicked spirit as being false in their speech and deceivers of the people. He also reveals the deceit of the demons and openly exposes that those are not gods. Not a relic of the wicked might exist any longer while an infant slays their priests, overturns their altars, defiles the places where sacrifices were offered with dead bodies, throws down the temples, cuts down the groves, breaks the pillars in pieces, breaks open the tombs of the ungodly so that no relic of the wicked might exist any longer. (3) He displayed zeal in the cause of godliness to such an extent. He proved himself a punisher of the ungodly while he faltered in speech like a child. David too was at once a prophet, a king and the root of our Saviour according to the flesh. As a youth he was anointed by Samuel to be king. (4) David himself says in one place: "I was small among my brethren and the youngest in the house of my father." (5)

Chapter 5: Expressions of respect for Ignatius

Time would fail me if I should endeavour to enumerate all those that pleased God in their youth, having been entrusted by God with either the prophetical, the priestly or the kingly office. The mentioned ones may suffice by way of bringing the subject to your remembrance. I entreat you not to consider me presumptuous or ostentatious in writing as I have done. I have set forth these statements, not as instructing you but simply as suggesting the matter to the remembrance of my father in God I know my own place and I do not compare myself with such as you. I salute the holly clergy and you, Christ loving people, who are ruled under your care as their pastor. All the faithful with us salute you. Pray, blessed shepherd, that I may in health s respects God.

Notes

1. Numeri 27:16 - 17
2. Jeremiah 1:7
3. See 2 Kings 22, 23
4. 1 Samuel 16
5. L.S.L. Brenton, *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, Greek and English*, (London: Bagster & Sons, 1879), Psalm 150:1, p. 787 [AT]

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Daniel, main character of the Book of Daniel
Eli, priest and judge in ancient Israel
Josiah (Yoshiyahu), king of Judah (c. 640 BC - 609 BC)
Maris, leader of the Christian community in Neapolis
Samuel, prophet in Judaism, Christianity and Islam
Solomon, Biblical Israelite king who built the first Temple of Jerusalem

The Epistle of Ignatius to Mary at Neapolis, near Zarbus

Ignatius, who is also called Theophorus, to her, who has obtained mercy through the most high God, the Father and Jesus Christ the Lord, who died for us, to Mary, my daughter, most faithful worthy of God and bearing Christ in her heart, wishes abundance of happiness in God.

Chapter 1: Acknowledgment of her excellence and wisdom

As part of the company of senses, sight is better than writing. By communicating proofs of friendship, sight honours the one who receives them. As the phrase runs, the second harbour of the refuge is the practice of writing. By your faith we have received it as a convenient haven from such a great distance, seeing that, by means of a letter, we have learned the excellence which exists in you. O you, the wisest of women, the souls of the good resemble fountains of the purest water: by their beauty they allure passers - by to drink of them, even though these should not be thirsty. Your intelligence invites us, as by a word of command, to participate in those divine draughts, which gush forth so abundantly in your soul.

Chapter 2: His own condition

O thou blessed woman, now I am not so much my own master as I am in the power of others. I am driven along by the various wills of many adversaries, being in one sense in exile, in another sense in prison and in a third sense, in bonds. But I pay no regard to those things. By the injuries inflicted on me through them, I acquire all the more the character of a disciple that I may attain to Jesus Christ. May I enjoy the torments which are prepared for me: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time *are* not worthy *to be compared* with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

Chapter 3: He had complied with her request

I have gladly acted as you requested in your letter, having no doubt concerning those persons whom you proved that they are worth. I am sure that you convey testimony to them by a judgement of God and not through the influence of carnal favour. Your numerous quotations od Scripture passages exceedingly delighted me; when I had read these passages, I no longer had a single doubtful thought concerning the matter. I did not sustain that those things were simply to be glanced over by me eyes, as I have received from you such an incontrovertible

demonstration. May I be in place of your soul, because you love Jesus, the Son of the living God. Wherefore, also He Himself says to you: "I love those that love me and they that seek me, shall find me." (1)

Chapter 4: Commendation and exhortation

Now it occurs to me to mention the truth of the report which I heard about you while you were at Rome with the blessed Pope Linus, succeeded now by the deservedly - blessed Clement, a hearer of Peter and Paul. By this time, you have added a hundred - fold to your reputation and may thou, O woman, still further increase it. I greatly desire to come to you so that I might rest with you but "...I know that the way of man *is* not in himself " (2), for the military guard, under which I am kept, hinders my purpose and does not permit me to go further. Indeed, in my current state, I cannot either do or suffer anything. Wherefore, deeming the practice of writing the second resource of my friends, for their mutual encouragement, I salute thy sacred soul, beseeching of thee to add still further to your vigour. Our present labour is but little, while the reward expected is great.

Chapter 5: Salutations and good wishes

Avoid those who deny the passions of Christ and His birth according to the flesh: many suffer now under this disease. It would be absurd to admonish you on other points, seeing that you are perfect in every good work and word and able also to exhort others in Christ. Salute all that are like - minded with yourself and who hold fast to their salvation in Christ. The presbyter, the deacons and, above all, the holy Hero, salute you. Cassian, my host, salutes you as well as my sister, his wife and their very dear children. May the Lord sanctify you for evermore in the enjoyment of bodily and spiritual health and may I see you in Christ obtaining the crown!

Notes

1. L.S.L. Brenton, *The Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, Greek and English*, (London: Bagster & Sons, 1879), Psalm 8:17, p. 795 [AT] Cf. Psalms 8:17 from the Old Testament: "I love those that love me and they that seek me, shall find peace". [AT]
2. Jeremiah 10:23

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Clement, Pope of Rome, after Pope Linus
Linus, Pope of Rome in 68 AD - c. 80 AD

Paul (Saul of Tarsus), (c. 5 AD - c. 65 AD), Christian apostle
Peter (Saint Peter), one of the Twelve Apostles of Jesus

The Epistle of Ignatius to St. John

Ignatius and the brethren who are with him to John, the holy presbyter

We are deeply grieved at your delay in strengthening us by your addresses and consolations. If your absence will be prolonged, it will disappoint many of us. Hasten then to come, for we believe it is expedient. Many of our women here desire to see Mary, the mother of Jesus. They wish day by day to run off from us to you, that they may meet with her and touch those breasts of hers which nourished the Lord Jesus and ask her about some other secret matters. Salome, the daughter of Anna, whom you mostly love, who stayed with her five months at Jerusalem and some other well - known persons, relate that she is full of all graces and all virtues, after the manner of a virgin, fruitful in virtue and grace. As they report, she is cheerful in persecutions and afflictions, free from murmuring in the midst of penury and want, grateful to those that injure her and rejoiced when exposed to troubles: she sympathizes with the wretched and the afflicted as sharing in their affliction and is not slow to come to their assistance. Moreover, she shines forth gloriously as contending in the fight of faith against pernicious conflicts of vicious principles or conduct. She is the lady of our new religion and repentance and the handmaid among the faithful of all works of piety. She is indeed devoted to the humble and she humbles herself more devotedly than the devoted and is wonderfully magnified by all, while at the same time she suffers destruction from the Scribes and the Pharisees. Beside these points, many relate to us numerous other things regarding her. However, we do not go so far to believe all in every detail and do not mention to you such items. From those worthy of credit, we

know that in Mary, the mother of Jesus, there is an angelic purity of nature allied with the nature of humanity. Such reports have greatly excited our emotions and eagerly urge us to desire a sight of this - if it be lawful so to speak - heavenly prodigy and most sacred marvel. You comply in haste with our desire. Fare thee well, Amen.

A Second Epistle of Ignatius to Saint John

His friend Ignatius to John the holy presbyter

If you will give me leave, I desire to go up to Jerusalem and see the faithful saints who are there, especially Mary the mother, whom they report to be an object of admiration and affection to all. Who would not rejoice to behold and to address her, who bore the true God from herself, provided he is a friend of our faith and religion? Similarly, I desire to see the remarkable James, who is surnamed Just, whom they relate to be very like Christ Jesus in appearance, in life and method of conduct, as if he were a twin brother. They say that if I see him, I see also Jesus Himself, as to all the features and aspect of His body. Moreover, I desire to see the other saints, both male and female. Alas! Why do I delay? Why am I kept back? Kind teacher, bid and hasten to fulfil my wish and fare thou well. Amen.

The Epistle of Ignatius to Virgin Mary

Her own friend Ignatius to the Christ - bearing Mary

You ought to have comforted and consoled me, who am a neophyte and a disciple of your beloved John. I have heard wonderful things to tell respecting your (son) Jesus and I am astonished by such a report. I desire with my whole heart to obtain information concerning the things which I have heard from thee, who were always intimate and allied with Him and who were acquainted with all His secrets. I have also written to you at another time and I have asked you concerning the same thing. Fare thou well and let the neophytes who are with me to be comforted of you and by you, in you. Amen.

Reply of the blessed Virgin to this letter

The lowly handmaid of Christ Jesus, her beloved fellow disciple

The things which you had heard and learned from John, concerning Jesus, are true. Believe them, cling to them and hold fast the profession of that Christianity which you have embraced and conform your habits and life to your profession. Now I will come in company of John to visit you and those that are with you. Stand fast in the faith (1) and show yourself a man. Do not let the fierceness of persecution move you but let your spirit be strong and rejoice in God, your Saviour. (2)

Notes

1. 1 Corinthians 16:13
2. Luke 1:47